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1950; and Wheelis 1958.) At best, it would suggest that the Thai informant was faced with a difficult problem external to himself—perhaps finding a job or a spouse, or thinking of his future—and was appraising his ability to deal with that problem. Also, such an appraisal would have a strong constraining element: the necessity to control one's hopes and desires (perhaps for the hypothetical job or spouse) in order to avoid potential pain or disappointment; in essence, "beware of your limitations; do not forget your station." This is in turn supported by certain Buddhist concepts, such as *?ubergkhaa*, or stoical indifference to the vicissitudes of life, among others.

Whether there *is any* way to express handily in Thai the Western notion of "the need for self-acceptance" is doubtful. Most villagers are too thoroughly narcissistic to require such a concept in their cognitive maps. Alternatively, there are other more direct ways of saying what "knowing myself" might mean in Thai, for example, "controlling my desires," "knowing whether I have the ability to do the job," or by referring directly to Buddhist doctrine. As such, these statements would be an expression of piety or the bolstering of one's self-confidence (or steeling oneself against failure) rather than psychic introspection.

A similar interpretive problem exists with the completion "his family." Because Thai kinship relations are so strongly influenced by concepts of benevolent superiority and dependent inferiority, most expressions of the need for affiliation with the family immediately imply the related need of succorance: security, support, protection, and sympathy, either as source or beneficiary.

The point of these comments is that the responses must always be first interpreted in the villagers' terms, not ours. Once made, precisely by explanatory notes such as these, these interpretations become part of the "data" and serve as a basis for our analysis. It should be recognized, however, that anthropological mythology (and these particular examples) to the contrary, not *all* the responses are interpretively dissimilar. When a villager says, *"When he hit me, I . . .* must hit him back," he means precisely the same thing we do. The point, therefore, is to be extremely sensitive to the possibility of differential meanings, underscore and explain it when it occurs, and use the native interpretation as a prerequisite and corrective to our own. For a brief but brilliant theoretical discussion of this problem see Bohannan 1959.

The Psychological Meaning of the Responses

The fourth premise concerns the psychological "meaning" of the responses. There are several aspects of this problem which require specification.

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*125 • 15 First, the informants' reactions to the imagined situations portrayed in the SCT items represent their *predispositions* to act in the manner indicated, rather than literal descriptions of how they would behave in real life.[8] They indicate a psychological readiness or propensity. Any overt behavior is the result of several determinants, only one of which is the individual's predispositions. Other factors include the nature and purpose of the reality situation; the individual's changing moods and skills; and in social situations, the expectations of the other person, his behavioral cues, and ego's perception of them, as well as the relative statuses of the participants (of extreme importance in Bang Chan). All these determinants—and probably others as well—come into play during any particular event, and the slightest change in one may result in different and unexpected forms of overt behavior. It is precisely because so many factors do lie behind the occurrence of an event that predictability in human affairs is so difficult. Yet, because to a large extent a person creates and structures for himself the situations in which he is involved, and because in these situations he is objectively free to respond in any number of different ways, his predisposition to act in a particular way is crucial in determining what actually does occur. Witness Rychlak's students. Basically it is the individual's organized system of predispositions, and their repeated—but not invariable—manifestation in action, which gives his overt behavior a certain consistency and unity, and which allows us to ascribe to him a particular "personality."

In real-life situations, however, the individual's predispositions are often obscured to the observer by more obvious factors such as those mentioned above, e.g., the social climate and the expectations and status of others. A major advantage of an unstructured instrument like the SCT is

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[8] Examination of the SCT literature on this point has been both time-consuming and intriguing. Despite the fact that there probably have been more than two hundred studies involving the use of the SCT—Levy (1952: 192) reports 139 studies between 1946 and 1951 alone—this writer has been able to discover only one. Rychlak's work on Japanese students in the United States (Rychlak 1955, and Rychlak, Mussen, and Bennett 1957), which concerns itself directly with the relationship between SCT responses and overt behavior. SCT responses have been correlated with other tests, attitude scales, psycho-galvanic skin responses, informants', psychiatrists', and teachers' reports, and measurements of "adjustment," but apparently only once with measures of overt behavior in the same areas covered by the items. Rychlak found that students who expressed a high degree of optimism and "sociality" on an SCT administered soon after their arrival in the United States (examples: *"To me the future looks . . . bright"*; *"To others I am . . . very sociable"*) were the same individuals who months later tended to participate in bull sessions and visit American homes; conversely, individuals who exhibited on the SCT an involvement with interpersonal conflicts (examples: *"My bosses are . . . intolerant"*; *"I failed because . . . others didn't understand me"*) later tended to use their leisure time in reading and avoided social clubs and parties. On the basis of these findings, Rychlak views the SCT as "a remarkably efficient predictor of the quality of the individual's social relationships."

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that it gives the informant extraordinary latitude to express his predispositions with relative freedom from these social constraints. The social constraints which do exist are self-defined and self-imposed. Other than being required to make sense, the informant has complete freedom to structure the situation posed by the SCT fragment as he pleases. His predispositions emerge unobscured as he assumes all the roles of the real-life drama, defining the situation as he chooses, placing himself and the imagined others in context, and then reacting to the situation. Although the process is a subjective and imaginative one, it retains at all times its ties to reality by the highly realistic nature of the stimuli. The predispositions thus revealed are realistic and ostensive rather than deep-lying or hidden although, as was suggested earlier, their analytic significance derives not from the manifest meanings of the responses but from more general, underlying denotations.

A second aspect of the responses concerns their psychological primacy. It is a fundamental postulate of this work that the informants' reactions represent their primary or dominant responses to the situations portrayed in the SCT items. This by no means implies that the absence of another kind of response indicates the absence of the capacity to have that sentiment nor that such an alternative sentiment is potentially inexpressible; it does mean, however, that our informants are not predisposed to react in that way.

Earlier in this chapter it was argued that the responses are "relatively unpremeditated" and that an incomplete sentence "taps the relatively unconscious expectations and conditionings which comprise the psychological essence of language and thought." Although these assertions are valid—certainly as contrasted with the results of direct questions—the word "relatively" must not be glossed over. The actual process of constructing an utterance always involves a great deal of psychic editing, and few people ever say what they "really" want to say in the sense of being completely unpremeditative. This was of course one of Freud's earliest (1904) lessons. But somewhere in the process of split-second decision making that goes on within the mind (Freud hypothesized that most of it takes place in the pre-conscious) the individual must make a choice and we have to assume that this choice, as revealed by his articulated statement, is his principal response. The individual might well have said something else. But the point is that he did *not*. The proffered statement was in fact the dominant one.

This raises a question that has been the subject of some discussion in the anthropological literature and which is particularly germane to the present analysis. A cursory review of the SCT data immediately indicates that the villlagers phrase many, although not most, of their responses in terms of cultural ideals, that is, in terms of precepts to which behavior

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should conform. (For example: *"The best way to treat a subordinate is . . .* to speak to him with kind and agreeable words"; *"When he thinks of his father, he thinks of . . .* the goodness and kindness his father has done for him.") This is not a universal pattern since definitions of the ideal are ambiguous, lacking, or inappropriate for many of the items; also, such definitions seem not to be applied to items which imply immediate action. However, they do appear with sufficient frequency to be noticeable.

None of this should be surprising, inasmuch as viewing behavior in terms of "the good" and "the proper" is a central characteristic of the villagers' thought and idiom. They tend, *considerably* more than Americans, to evaluate (in an ethical sense) people and events rather than describe them, and even to describe by evaluating. Ask most villagers: "What kind of a person is so-and-so?" and their replies will consistently be in terms of whether he is "bad" or "good," rather than in terms of non-evaluative description, *e.g.*, he is "funny," "passive," "interesting." The words, *khon mai dii* and *khon dii* ("a bad person" and "a good person") are two of the most frequently occurring items in the Thai lexicon. One might epigrammatically characterize much of the villagers' thought as "super-ego-dominated." That this mode of thought should be applied to many of the SCT situations is hardly unexpectable.[9]

Having recognized this tendency, however, there is the problem of assessing its psychocultural meaning. Do such appeals to the ideal, especially as applied to the self, in any way weaken our definition of the responses as "predispositions to action?" Are many of the responses mere verbalisms that have little to do with real behavior?

A number of theorists, notably Murdock (1940 and 1954) and Kluckhohn (1943*b* and 1951) have taken the position that cultural behavior should be distinguished into two fundamentally different forms: ideal patterns and real patterns. The former are "those norms which are verbalized as the ideals to which behavior should conform" (Murdock 1954: 22); and the latter, patterns of actual, overt behavior. Opler has taken issue with the necessity for this distinction, and has argued (1948: 116):

> My own feeling is that the concern over precepts or ideal patterns which contrast with or stand apart from behavior is a pleasant distraction which will not get us very far. In my opinion the disparity between rule and behavior in society has been greatly exaggerated. Actually, behavior remains remarkably close to rules or precepts which are

[9] This same characteristic has been described in other contexts (Wilson and Phillips 1958, Phillips 1958, L. M. Hanks 1959*a* and 1959*b*) as the essentially moral nature of the villagers' universe: the tendency, largely implicit, for Bang Chaners to perceive events of the most diverse kinds within an ethical frame of reference. It might well be, as Redfield had argued for many years (1941, 1953, and 1956) that such a cognitive orientation is characteristic of all peasant peoples.

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considered of moment by the group. I think that it can be demonstrated that when precept and activity draw too far apart, a modification of one or the other is likely to take place to close up the gap.

In assessing my psychological test materials, I take the following position with regard to this issue. The distinction between the ideal and the real is an analytic requirement because obviously there are some instances where the two patterns are not congruent. However, once such distinction has been made there is no inherent necessity to assume that there *must* be a gap between the two patterns or if there is a gap, to assume that it must be especially wide. One will inevitably encounter in Bang Chan cases where subordinates are not spoken to "with kind and agreeable words." But on the whole, the extent to which real behavior does accord with this precept is impressive. For the most part, it is not a mere verbalism but rather a viable guide to action: a subordinate who is not treated with kind and agreeable words will not (depending of course on other situational factors as well) long maintain his ties to his superior. This same reasoning applies to the majority of the cases in which informants couch their responses in terms of cultural ideals.

A third aspect of the responses concerns the psychological "level" at which they will be interpreted. Because of the highly realistic nature of the completions, the necessity to interpret them in Thai terms (which precludes "blind analyses"—see DuBois 1944) and the necessity to work with the pooled responses of many individuals, our interpretations will not go psychodynamically very "deep." On the other hand, neither will we remain at the level of the manifest meanings of the responses. Although an informant's completion may represent a precise description of the way he would behave in real life, and in many cases does, it is more sensible from an analytic standpoint to view the response as a symptom of an underlying, more generalized, psychological orientation. The reasons for this are twofold: first, many of the responses which are superficially different seem to express simply alternate facets of a single, underlying predisposition; second, and more important, we must remember that on theoretical grounds personality characteristics are not, as Inkeles and Levinson point out (1954: 981) "phenotypic, behavior-descriptive terms, but rather are higher level abstractions that refer to stable, generalized dispositions or modes of functioning and may take a great variety of concrete behavioral forms."

In these terms, a statement such as *"When he saw that others avoided him, he . . .* also avoids them" indicates not only a person's desire not to associate with those who avoid him but, more important, an underlying, more general disposition *to accept and maintain a breakdown in social relations.* Moreover, the latter interpretation also encompasses such varying responses as: ". . . must not speak to them because they are bad. They

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like to look down upon people" and ". . . probably was not generous with them, so they avoided him." The significance of this underlying interpretation becomes even more apparent when the three responses are contrasted with other possible but unoffered completions which belong to totally different interpretive categories, for example, ". . . tried to make up with them" or ". . . asked them why?" signifying *attempts to reintegrate or understand the interpersonal rupture* and ". . . felt terribly hurt," indicating *emotional pain or disturbance.*

A Working Conception of Modal Personality

Our fifth and final premise is concerned with developing a workable conception of modal personality despite the inevitable paradoxes which attend such an endeavor.

The fundamental problem here is that in abstracting out the psychological similarities which the villagers share with one another, we become unavoidably involved in the difficulties of working with "conjugate variables"; that is, the more we concern ourselves with the commonality of a personality trait, the less we simultaneously learn about the role of that trait in the functioning of the individual members of the sample. The significance of this is not so much that we sacrifice an understanding of individuals for an understanding of the group, but that in so doing we must also sacrifice some of the depth and perceptiveness of our analysis. A successful personality study is in large measure achieved by descriptive contrast: we learn more about human beings the less they appear like other people. When subtle individual differences must be submerged for purposes of group characterization, the resulting descriptions must necessarily be less sensitive and precise.

The root of the problem lies in the fact that our basic units of analyses are individuals who, despite all the similarities they share as members of Thai culture, are obviously different from one another in specifics. Moreover, as Wallace points out in a recent article (1961a: 147–148), from the point of view of culture-personality theory, they *must* have certain psychological differences:

> The problem of psychic unity is sometimes obscured by our tendency to regard human societies as populations and not as groups when we make psychological statements. A population of individuals may be described without references to their interrelationships; but a group cannot be considered apart from its organizational structure. Thus physical, demographic, or personality characteristics of the members of a population can be stated, explicitly or implicitly, as a statistical distribution on one or more dimensions, and to the extent that the data

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156 available channels of social participation and the rewards that are attached to them. . . ."

121 114 15 Without claiming in any way to know the thinking that prompted Kaplan's provocative comments on the importance of the motivation of conformity in shaping action, I wonder if it is not based on the supposition that situations in all cultures are similar to those that we typically encounter in our own highly complex, functionally specific culture—a culture which, *if it is to operate in the highly complex and relatively efficient way we know it*, requires that individuals conform to the demands of their tasks. In other terms, to what extent is the argument for conformity based on the supposition that the majority of relationships in most societies are similar to those which obtain, for example, between workers on an assembly line or between a secretary and her employer, where, if conformity were not maintained most of the time, the consequences would be functionally disastrous, disastrous to the very *purpose* of the relationship? While I take issue here with Kaplan, there is one crucial aspect in which I am in complete agreement with what he seems to be aiming at. That is, if his argument is in fact based upon, and directed at understanding, a strictly American model, I can thoroughly understand the import of his question: "What is the motivational basis for the generalized disposition to conformity . . . ?" After living in Thailand for several months and observing, and often identifying with, the ease with which individuals pursued their own purposes, oblivious to the requirements of conformity, I began to wonder not about the Thai capacity to maintain loosely structured relationships but about the considerably more mystifying American capacity to conform to the expectations of others. From a *psychological* point of view, the latter is by far the more difficult and demanding, requiring as it does inhibition of and control over one's own desires and a deeply developed predisposition to orient oneself to others. How this orientation is developed and sustained on such a pervasive scale as is found in American culture—particularly with regard to the rewards involved ("Are *instrumental* rewards such as money really sufficient to link person A to person B?")—is clearly, as Kaplan suggests by his posing of the issue, an analytic problem the motivational details of which we presently have only the dimmest understanding. To a certain extent this orientation is explicable in terms of the simple malleability of human beings; in terms of the consummatory rewards that instrumental satisfactions eventually lead to; or perhaps in terms of what Wallace (1957) calls, "cultural identification," or the love of one's culture patterns for their own sake (in this case, love of the modes of social interaction to be found in one's culture). This last would involve interactional patterns assuming a *motivational* "functional autonomy" (Allport 1937) of their own, that is, ego deriving an *intrinsic*

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satisfaction from fulfilling another's expectations. However, it is clear that the actual motivational process individuals go through in order to learn to be concerned with the expectations of others—and considering the pervasiveness of this concern, it must involve either intensive or sustained learning—has yet to be examined in a ramified way.[1]

To my knowledge, the only scholars to address themselves directly to the question of the motivations and rewards for conformity are Kaplan in an earlier paper (1957) and Parsons (1952, 1961, and Parsons *et al.* 1953). Kaplan argued that there are two motivational tendencies making for conformity: the desire to behave morally and the desire to please others. The former tendency is quite explicable in terms of the development and functioning of the super-ego (a universal human attribute), and by emphasizing this, particularly with his later use of the pointed phrase, "good citizen," Kaplan's contribution is considerable. However, the latter consideration begs the question of why individuals should be so motivated to please others, and raises the additional problem, as I have done here, of whether all people are equally motivated in such directions. Parsons' early discussions of conformity simply propound the "evaluative, cognitive, and cathectic" satisfactions that the fulfillment of prescribed patterns award to the individual. In his later, more carefully elaborated essay, he sees the roots of conformity in the inherent helplessness of the human infant. In what is essentially a masterful sociological translation of Freud, he argues that conformity develops into a "generalized goal" or "mode of organization of the ego" as the individual successively identifies with, cathects, and internalizes the attitudes of the powerful figures (his parents) who respond to his helplessness. In this sense, Parsons seems to be arguing that the individual's major initial reward for conformity is the maintenance of his own life. The individual's conformity is gradually generalized as he goes through successive developmental stages, reaching its crystallization—the "point of no return," as it were—in the painful options of the Oedipal

[1] The theories that have been most concerned with the nature of conformity and "self-other" orientations—role theory and "symbolic interactionist" theory—have for the most part viewed the *motivations* and *rewards* for conformity as self-evident. That is, the immense literature of these "schools" has tended to focus not on why individuals should wish to conform in the first place, but on the skills, consequences, and non-motivational processes of conformative behavior. Writers such as G. H. Mead (1934), Cameron and Magaret (1951), Sarbin (1954), Shibutani (1961), and Rose (1962) all recognize the necessity of individuals to be socialized into conformity, but they go no further than describing the manifest processes of socialization—"intentional instruction" and "incidental learning," "imitation" and "spontaneous play activities." Having once mentioned these processes, they simply go on to assume that the conformative motivation is thoroughly internalized and self-sustaining. The only exception I have found is Shibutani who addresses himself to the matter of reward in a single sentence (1961: 509): "For most children, the voluntary inhibition of impulses begins with attempts to please those whom they admire."

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12 situation. It might be added that since the Oedipal situation is very much of
114 a moral crisis, Parsons' arguments go far in supporting Kaplan's earlier
• 15 contentions. Parsons, however, says little about the *different* ways in which parents respond to the child's helplessness and little about *variations* in the intensity and types of identifications, cathexes, and internalizations that the individual may implement—factors which would obviously lead to different kinds of conformative tendencies. Our earlier materials on Bang Chan socialization are particularly instructive on this point. In fact, if Parsons' formulation were linked to those data, it would go a long way to explain precisely why Bang Chaners have such a weakly developed sense of conformity. In the same way, the contrast helps to underscore the profound sense of interpersonal involvement, dependence, and concern inculcated in members of our own culture during the developmental process. To Parsons, the quintessence of these interpersonal investments is, of course, the Oedipal situation: the prototypic encounter with the power of external authority and all that such power implies for the individual's need to conform and to deny and control his own impulses. If this interpretation is correct, it would further suggest that the Oedipal situation must be based, *in the first instance*, on the developmental experience of close interpersonal involvement—an experience which, as our Thai data demonstrate, is subject to broad cross-cultural variation.

*128 The problem of "conformity" raises an additional question, one that has
*156 been implicit to many of our earlier remarks, but which merits explicit consideration in these final pages. At several points in the text, it was suggested that the villagers, with their profound sense of self-concern and freedom of choice, often choose to ignore or to isolate themselves from the effects and influences of others. This kind of behavior is a major dimension of their loosely structured relationships; it appears as well in their handling of dependency, anxiety, and aggression. From a psychological point of view, the behavior can be interpreted in one of two ways. On the one hand, it can be interpreted to mean that the villagers have difficulty in relating themselves to others, and use isolation as a means of defense. Implicit here is the notion of emotional deprivation, for who but a deprived person should wish to withdraw from contact with others? On the other hand, the behavior can be read to mean that the villagers are emotionally tough, and simply do not need other people very much. Here isolation is seen as self-reliance and mature emotional security. Throughout this study, I have chosen to stress the latter interpretation.

*128 This kind of interpretation is not an easy one to justify in contemporary
114 Western social science. Implicit to almost all of our thinking is the Judaeo-
*156 Christian assumption (more recently codified by Durkheim and Freud)
181 that the greatest psychological pleasures an individual experiences are

in the shwan khan "gift" handy cash. The income was about 40 to 200 baht ($2.00 to $20.00) per year. 759 465

The duties of a midwife were not time consuming if all went well. There was practically no pre-natal care, and a few hours of care was given for only three days after birth. If complications arose, though, the midwife spent long hours away from home. In fact the husband of one midwife grumbled, "You don't receive anything, and just waste time. Sometimes you stay away over night, and no one watches the house or the children." 759 84

In their social role, midwives felt personal but not group solidarity. A solid bond existed between an older midwife and the particular younger one to whom he or she had given training and magic. Those related by blood or marriage sometimes worked together, and even turned over cases to each other if outside demands became pre-eminent. If in trouble on a case, midwives did not call on each other unless as close, affectionate relatives but turned rather for help from a mǎ or to the Minburi Health Center. Yet sometimes rivalry was severe. If the family of the parturient felt that no progress was being made with one midwife, they called in another and another. Each did his utmost and then stepped down when it had to be admitted, "My magic is not enough." The final expert who brought mother and baby through before the deposed midwives glowed inwardly with pride and skill and satisfaction that the magic of his particular teacher had proved effective. The sharpness of the competition reverberated through the words, "I pushed the other midwives down." Community standing or "face" was not lost by an unsuccessful case because of the midwives' fundamental role as helpers only, their faith in their own experience, and again, the conviction that the course of childbirth was merit-determined. 759 571 [756] [845] [793] [578] 759 554 152 789

Though living like other elder citizens of the community in their social role they were more respected. Known as selfless donors of time and energy for the sake of others, whose successes gave proof of merit and nurturing capacity, they were viewed as assets to the community. In spite of competition considerable affection was evident between some. They were elders before a sea of youth, old friends who had for years lived and farmed side by side, met at ceremonies, and shared many experiences. 759 554 572

If the case were in difficulty sometimes a mǎ was called, sometimes a midwife or even both. What was the nature of their respective specialties? What in fact made certain midwives "professionals" (thaan chîip [Mo.F. 990]) when others who had equal or more experience were NOT so considered? 759

fishing and selling vegetables, they managed to obtain a fair diet. The father's skill as a masseur was valued especially at periods of heavy farm work, after childbirth, and by the cooks at a ceremonial feast. This brought in from 2 to 12 baht per week.

In Group A, Families 67 and 103 were at the most difficult period of life, with young, dependent children, and housing, land and equipment to be acquired. By great industry, including egg production from a flock of 60 chickens, and by severe "belt-tightening," Household 103 was lifting itself into a propertied position. The parents in Household 67 were shy. One or the other of the two older children often stayed home from school to look after the baby, so that both parents could work. Husband and wife in Household 12 were both very shy, the only ones in the survey group who were at all reluctant to participate. They seemed ashamed of limited food. The wife was frequently ill. In Household 222, the 14-year old daughter often gathered and sold vegetables at Minburi before school in the morning. She might have full charge of the younger children for days at a time. A daughter who worked as a servant in Bangkok contributed 50 baht per month to this household. In Household 215, the activities of the wife as medium were predominant. Pay included food, often cooked, and the free use of 3½ rai of land, as well as cash. Maintenance of a son in school in Bangkok cost about 1000 baht per year plus 60 tang of rice. In Household 2, the elderly wife's services as "boss-buyer and cook" at ceremonials, and as marriage go-between did not bring in cash, but gifts, clothing and much participation in feasts.

All families in the survey group were Thai Buddhists, and 6 of them offered food to priests more or less regularly. On 17 of the 24 survey days when the observer visited these households, food was offered. Two of the 5 families that did not customarily give food to priests, did so on one and two survey days, respectively. In one case food was offered to a son who had been recently ordained. Rice was always included in the food offered, and in 3 of the 20 instances observed rice only was given. The weight of cooked rice given by one family in one day ranged from 185 to 1210 grams, with an average of about 600 grams. In 16 instances, some cooked food such as fish or vegetable curry was given with the rice; in one instance fresh pineapple was given.

Cash Expenditures for Food. - Mean total, and per capita daily cash expenditures for food for survey days, are shown, by household in Table 3. (See Table 2, p. 23 for division of food expenditures for Groups A,B) Although cash expenditures for food varied considerably, the amounts in all cases were small, and approximated figures obtained by Janlekha (1955) for 106 households. Larger consumption of animal products, which were the most expensive items purchased,

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the parents often do not really care and children can pretty much get away with doing what they want.[14]

With regard to other expressions of the recognition of individual dignity, one rarely sees in Bang Chan any physical or even verbal coercion. (The rare use of whipping, noted above, is to punish transgression, not to implement action.) Other than in horseplay, children do not push each other around; in my twenty-two months in Thailand, I saw not one case of young children in a serious fight, despite the fact that I looked for it. Very rare indeed is the parent who uses force or the threat of force on his child; there is no Siamese equivalent to the American intimidation, "You had better do that or else. . . ." In general, Bang Chaners proceed on the simple assumption that if people, including children, do not do what you ask them, they have good—and more important, private—reasons for responding that way; there is no need for, or interest in, self-justification. The major means of inducing recalcitrants to conform to your wishes is to cajole, wheedle, and flatter them (see particularly the responses to the Sentence Completion items, *"The best way to treat a subordinate is . . ."*; *"The worst way to treat a subordinate is . . ."* in chapter V). A less conscious but more frequently practiced alternative is simply to withdraw support: the parent who turns his back on the child and walks out (particularly evident in our TAT stories),[15] the older sibling who refuses to take his younger ones with him when there is entertainment to be seen, and the like. It must be noted, however, that social disengagement, although frequently utilized, does not always work; often the individual who is left suspended merely accepts the fact and continues about his business. The major point to be recognized is that villagers do not use forms of direct, blatant coercion on others. If soft words or the withdrawal of love will not move them, then their decision, freely determined, must be respected.

Love and affection within the family appear primarily in two forms. Their most typical expression is shown through the gifts, favors, and services people do for each other. The degree of affection that individuals feel toward one another is in fact explicitly measured in these terms. Thus, a father says that of all his daughters, the one who has given him the greatest pleasure is "the one who sells things . . . When she gets money,

[14] In qualification, however, it must be noted that all Bang Chaners are extremely sensitive to social cues—partially as a consequence of having to balance off their individualistic propensities against the demands of the authority system—and here the children ignore their parents only because the latter have indicated by their very halfheartedness that they do not care. The children can, and do, quickly hop to it on the slightest indication of parental seriousness: a stern look, for example. My point, however, is that such looks are comparatively rare.

[15] In another paper, Hanks and Hanks (1963) make the same observation on the basis of behavioral materials.

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593 she gives it to me." In describing his relationship with his maternal grand-
152 parents, with whom he spent all but two of the first twelve years of his life,
159 this same person says:
593
431
603

> My younger sister and I were born one year after the other. So mother gave me to grandmother to be weaned. I lived with her until I became a novice at the monastery at the age of twelve. I lived with grandmother, so I loved grandmother and grandfather more. I loved grandmother even more than my own mother and father. Wherever grandfather and grandmother went, I went too. Grandmother loved me: she always gave me sweets and toys. I had everything I wanted because I was the only young thing in the house. She loved me. She was going to give her property to me, land and gold, as much as she was going to give to her own children. But it was only a promise. I got the gold, but not the land, because when grandmother died, grandfather got a new wife. She was young. . . . I didn't quite like her. The young woman was too economical. . . . Sometimes she prevented grandfather from buying good things for me. When grandfather was going to buy gold or anything for me, she stopped him. She wanted him to buy for her more than for his grandchild.

593 This excerpt, taken from the biography of one of the life history informants and comprising almost the complete portrayal of the relationship between the informant and the individuals with whom he spent the crucial years of his childhood, is by no means atypical. The point is that of all the myriad
(431) elements in the relationship, or of all the loving characteristics that in his
(603) eyes the grandparents had, he chose to emphasize only the material gifts they had given him as the measure of their love. Other informants are no different: one man said he knew his father did not love him because when he died he left the family home to the Buddhist monastery; and a woman said she admired her father because "when he died there was property left. He was a good man: he did not abandon his children. He was worried about them." (Her other reason for *admiring* him was that "he was the person who brought me into the world.")

596 The other major form of familial love is evidenced in the camaraderie,
593 warmth, and generosity that surrounds the family in planning and ac-
243 complishing the various tasks associated with rice farming. As indicated earlier, the cultivation and harvesting of rice is not only an economic operation in Bang Chan, but almost a way of life. When villagers must deal with the very real and complex problems of planting and bringing in the harvest, all the individualistic propensities, and even to an extent the authority patterns, with which they normally indulge themselves recede before the coöperative requirements of the task at hand. In a very real sense the functional requirements of the economic activity, particularly during

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harvest time, serve to create a rite of intensification as family members decide together what work will be done by whom, arise early in the morning to work together happily in the fields—sometimes for as long as fourteen hours at a stretch—and actually see the fruits of their coöperative labor mount up on the threshing floors. The sense of familial solidarity and intradependence, and its associated feelings of love, is experienced by all.[10] Also, since harvesting more often than not involves working reciprocally with other families, the host of a reciprocal labor group giving a feast whenever possible at the end of the day, it serves, although to a lesser extent, to intensify feelings of membership in the larger community.

Summary

In my discussion of the "cultural background," I have dwelt primarily on kinship because the family is functionally the most significant social unit in the village and because it is within the context of kinship that personality is developed and, in Bang Chan, most frequently expressed. None of this is meant to imply a lack of importance for other social units—the monastery, the school, the state—or for the non-institutionalized relationships—friends, drinking partners, and business contacts. However, kinship does provide the basic psychological model for all human relationships in Bang Chan,

[10] Although the annual cycle of Thai peasants is described in detail in the available ethnographies on Thai rural life (deYoung 1955, Fraser 1960, Kaufman 1960, Ringshill 1960, Sharp *et al.* 1953), a few words should be added about the psychological dimensions of this cycle. Thus familial solidarity, intradependence, and love are not the only sentiments that are heightened during the harvest period. Perhaps the most striking quality of this season (December to January) is the increase in the optimism, joy, and general psychic well-being of the villagers: people laugh more loudly than usual; they relish telling about the things they are going to buy; parents take more kindly to the gallivanting of the children. These months contrast with transplanting time (late July to early August) and the period prior to harvest (October to November), when an overabundance of rain can destroy the villagers' rice seedlings or their entire crop. These latter periods are marked not so much by anxiety as by a sense of watchful waiting. All these contrast with the Dry season when things are especially quiet in Bang Chan and when villagers spend their time repairing farming equipment and houses, gossiping, or are working on jobs outside the community. Villagers say that of the three major seasons of the year (Dry, February to June; Rainy, June to January; Cold, January to February) they like the Rainy season best. The season coincides with the rice-growing cycle, is marked by Buddhist Lent and, excepting a final week of Monsoon downpour, is in fact the most comfortable period of the year.

These seasonal activities and attitudes also have direct implications for field work. Thus, while villagers gave freely of their time during the dry season and after the harvest, and during the latter were especially outgoing and benign, many simply would not see me during the weeks of planting and harvesting. The benign attitudes of villagers interviewed after the harvest were reflected directly in the data, as were the noncommittal responses of some villagers who were interviewed during transplanting time.

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are social peers, the Bang Chaners would easily turn the conversation to a discussion of the technical aspects of rice farming or even gambling. The latter would likely be discussed with a social superior only after some acquaintance. On the other hand, if one were clearly the other's superior, the superior would probably talk not about the methods of rice farming but, more generally and benignly, inquire, "Is all going well with you? Is there any way I might help you?" He might even proffer some unsolicited advice or aid. The tone and theme of the conversation would be expressive largely of the superior's concern with the welfare of his new-found friend, which the latter would typically accept.

All this is usually accompanied by gentle laughter and careful attention to appropriate pronominal forms. The good host will also serve his guest rain water, and if possible, scented rain water. If opportunity and finances permit, he may even offer him a warm Coca-Cola. The youngster who will actually serve the refreshment will make sure that it is on a coaster and that his hands are in the proper ritual position when he offers the drink to the guest. Such are the ingredients from which potential friendships are made.

Although the particulars of the kind of politeness found among family and friends are different from the above, the forms are essentially the same. Villagers do not talk about the funny accents of the people who live next door to them, nor do they rush to serve scented water when a brother comes to call. But they do take pains to express respect for each other by using proper honorific and pronominal forms, by looking to the oldest competent family member for advice, by talking of subjects that are pleasant and amusing, but never threatening or embarrassing.

The avoidance of embarrassing topics—even when the airing of such topics may be crucially important or beneficial to one of the parties concerned—is one of the most pronounced facets of village social life. To a Westerner accustomed to outspokenness, the types of situations that villagers define as embarrassing and the lengths to which they will go to avoid them sometimes appear to border on the sado-masochistic. Detailed interviews with two women whose husbands had taken second wives, for example, indicate that although at the time they were deeply disturbed by their husbands' actions (primarily for economic reasons; secondarily for emotional-sexual ones) they never once even brought the subject up with their husbands. They explained that they were too ʔaaj (embarrassed) to do so. In neither case was this embarrassment expressive of any feeling of inadequacy on their parts (the fear of hearing their husbands say, "I took a second wife because you are not adequate"). It was prompted rather by the desire to avoid an awkward and potentially rancorous confrontation. They did not want to put anybody on the spot. (Whether such a confrontation would *actually* lead to overt rancor is almost impossible to ascertain because

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it in fact so rarely takes place. In fact, the "hypotheses" of these women are perfect manifestations of what, in the technical sense, is *anxiety* rather than *fear* about what might occur.) The marital situations of both these women have since been routinized so that they have come to accept the second wives as part of their normal domestic lives. However, the vehemence with which they report these incidents indicates that at the time they paid for their wish to avoid embarrassment with considerable psychic distress. In terms of the basic attitudes involved, these situations were not too unlike that which obtained for Dang: to avoid a potentially sticky social situation, politeness and complete silence were maintained.

Somewhat different order from the above are the numerous instances where "good friends" will avoid reporting to each other unhappy or distressing information although it is clearly to the other's advantage to have such information in order better to cope with the difficulty. In one case, a villager had been working for weeks on a land sale deal which would have netted him a brokerage fee of two thousand *baht* (approximately one hundred dollars, a considerable sum in a community where the average annual family income is, before expenses, only eighty-five hundred *baht*). A friend had meanwhile learned that another villager, with whom he was not at all close, had sweet-talked the customer into permitting him to handle the sale, much to the detriment of his own friend, the original broker. However, rather than warn the friend of what was happening, he simply said nothing. When asked to explain why he kept his silence, he said that he was just too *ʔaaj* to speak up. Although the consequences of "ʔaaj-ness" were in this case more extreme than usual, the situation itself was not. In another, less dramatic instance a villager mentioned to us that in coming across the rice fields that afternoon he had noticed that his neighbor's windmill had broken down. The belt connecting the windmill to the irrigating machine used in raising water into the fields had slipped from the drive shaft. However, despite the obvious importance of this fact to his neighbor—the planting of his rice seedlings was completely dependent on the noria raising a sufficient amount of water into the field at the right time—the friend failed to tell his neighbor what had happened. When asked why, he said that he was *ʔaaj* about making his friend unhappy.

What is important about the above illustrations is not so much their typicality—one can cite instances where friends are considerably more realistic and helpful—but rather the legitimacy of the rationalizations of the inactive friends. All Bang Chaners can understand and accept the reluctance of a villager to be the person who actually triggers off another individual's discomfort. There is a genuine (albeit misplaced) sense of responsibility about not making another unhappy. What is important is the immediate, face-to-face situation. If a person must ultimately suffer, that is his own problem; but at least the friend can say, "I did not 'cause' it."

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Villagers also recognize the reluctance of an individual to become involved in another person's problems on the grounds of avoiding the accusation of *actually* having caused them. They say (but again, empirical instances of this type are very hard to find) that frequently the person with good intentions is turned on by the very friend he is trying to help, for example, "Since you know so much about the broken windmill perhaps you were the one who broke it!" Both these attitudes result from a rather overinflated view of one's importance to the friend, as if the friend would be more concerned with the agent of information than with the information itself. This is not so much a confusion of means and ends as a re-identification of them. Finally, some of the villagers' reluctance is probably also due to simple indifference or laziness regarding the plight of the friend.

Other expressions of the "ʔaaj-ness" complex are more clearly altruistic than the above. Villagers explain, for example, that the reason there is never any more than one candidate for the post of hamlet or commune headman, on the rare occasions when such elections are held, is to avoid embarrassing the individuals involved. The eventual headman would be embarrassed because the presence of a competitor would suggest doubt about his competence; the candidate who lost would be embarrassed by the very fact that he lost. To avoid hurt feelings, only one candidate is presented, voted on, and elected.

We have been talking above about politeness primarily in a negative sense, that is, about the lengths to which villagers will go to *avoid* discomforting others or upsetting peaceful relationships. This aspect was stressed because its expressions represent a somewhat unique form of patterned social interaction. However, the many positive forms of the villagers' politeness to friends and kin should not be minimized: their concern with choosing topics of conversation they think will interest or entertain others; their search for opportunities to flatter them, sometimes in pseudo-mocking fashion, but more often to make them feel good; their attention to providing others with a pleasing audience—being silent, attentive, and eager when others are declaiming on a favorite subject. Of course, many times the villagers are not listening, but they try to behave as if they were. The aim here is to make others feel that what they are saying is worthwhile. An important part of this is that one almost never directly challenges the veracity or logic of the speaker's statements. If disbelief is the only appropriate response, it should be done silently. Nothing except personal pain and interpersonal tension would be gained from a direct challenge. If one feels strongly enough about the issue, which is very rare,[16] the presentation of an *alternative* view would not be inappropriate. But one

[16] The rarity of strong feelings is due to the fact that so often the very purpose of such conversations is to convey politeness and nothing more. The actual topic of conversation is simply a medium of contact, not a matter to be seriously discussed.

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must be extremely careful not to phrase it as a direct refutation of the speaker. Again, there is present in this approach the Thai assumption that the most important aspect of a social relationship is the psychic comfort and welfare of the persons involved, not the truth or validity of the matter under discussion. The overriding ethic is that each person not only has a right to be heard, but should be made to feel comfortable as well.

Related to the above, but distinctive enough to require a category of its own, is the form of politeness expressed in the villagers' nervous laughter and in their preoccupation with inconsequential topics of conversation. Laughter and smiling is such a universal attribute of Thai demeanor (an early volume on Siam by W. A. R. Wood was in fact entitled *Land of Smiles*) that it is not always easy to distinguish precisely between this particular form and other more relaxed expressions of lightheartedness. From the point of view of social intention—to be appealing and inoffensive to others—they are probably not distinguishable. What sets this form apart is mainly the situation in which it is found: a villager is apt to laugh nervously when talking about unhappy or unfortunate experiences. Likewise he will laugh or resort to inconsequential topics when trying to get something from another person or knowing that someone is trying to get something from him, in either case being unsure of how the other person will react; when meeting a person, often of higher status, for the first time and feeling compelled to relate to him, but not knowing quite how. Again, this mode of interaction is clearly not unique to Bang Chan. However, villagers resort to it so frequently, or define so many situations as the kind necessitating its use, that it emerges as one of the most salient modalities of Thai interaction. In a sense, the nervousness that is betrayed indicates some of the internal strain that villagers undergo in maintaining a constant front of politeness.

It should be noted, however, that they are well aware of their uneasiness: they will often admit it to you in more relaxed moments. Also, other villagers in attendance can immediately spot it, and will tell you that the person was nervous. What is so characteristically nice about the villagers, however, is that they will almost never take advantage of a person's nervousness to score a point for themselves. Uneasiness is defined simply as a neutral personality trait, part of the way in which an individual presents himself and not a symptom of psychic weakness. In fact, from the point of view of influencing the purpose or direction of an interaction, it is usually ignored. What is *socially* important is that a person act nicely, not how he feels about the way he acts; the latter is his own business. It might further be noted that the recognition of one's own uneasiness, without at the same time feeling threatened by its exposure, is symptomatic of the villager's relatively strong ego structure. A Bang Chaner can maintain a certain

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front, know that it actually elicits and betrays his anxiety, but have such implicit trust in his own resources that he feels no need to alter his behavior. Simply stated: uneasiness when it occurs is accepted as a social psychological fact of life; it is not felt as a threat to the integrity of the personality.

The actual expressions of nervousness and inconsequential conversation vary considerably. Perhaps their most obvious (and justifiable) expression is when a villager, who wants to get something from another person, for example, a job, a loan, higher rent on land, is uncertain about the other's reaction and approaches him by hedging around the issue with giggles and light, irrelevant comments. This mode of behavior typically occurs when there is no history of reciprocal benefits between the parties or when a middleman cannot be used.[17] Although villagers themselves do not consider such comments "irrelevant" (probably because from a ritualistic point of view they are not), it is hard to define a detailed discussion of a person's buttons or belt buckle as anything but a kind of phatic communion. Sometimes conversations of this type will go on for twenty and thirty minutes, often branching off to include more topical interests such as the size of eggs or the calls of birds, before reaching the point. Frequently they never reach the point, since somewhere along the line the individual recognizes from the tone of the conversation that the other person is not in the proper mood to entertain his request; in this case, the individual will explain that he came simply "to chat." Sometimes the friend will begin to giggle uneasily (particularly if the protagonist's references to him contain an excess of flattery) as he becomes aware of the purpose of the conversation and wishes to evade facing the ultimate issue. Very often, even when the final request comes out, he can avoid it simply by giggling. Under such circumstances a giggle is crucially communicative: it is the person's polite substitute for "No," or "Let us bring this particular topic of conversation to an end." Giggling is a wonderfully effective way of carrying on a "conversation" (for those who can read its "vocabulary") because one can so readily convey his refusal, wariness, and even hostility while at all times maintaining the illusion of friendliness. It is precisely because the villagers' giggling frequently rests on such devious attitudes that it appears

[17] The *quid pro quo* basis of the former would permit a considerably more direct approach. It is not difficult to be frank with a person when both you and he realize that you are asking for an earlier obligation to be repaid or that you are creating a new one which may be called upon later when needed. Villagers are highly responsive to such obligations, often going to considerable effort and personal discomfort to meet them. A middleman, on the other hand, is used precisely to avoid the kind of delicate encounter described here. As a disinterested third party, he can be completely candid in his requests. However, for reasons of secrecy (usually when the request involves some potential competition or envy of other villagers, or perhaps some sharp-dealing) the use of a middleman may be inappropriate.

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571 521 152 201 154 to be somewhat nervous. Like the conversational topics mentioned above, its purpose is to maintain social contact, but at a minimal substantive level.

152 154 731 57 Other uses of giggling are less consciously purposeful than the above. Perhaps the most frequent instance of this is when villagers are talking about or responding directly to an unfortunate situation: a flood destroying the rice crop, a friend or relative dying or being beaten up, a person committing suicide. Giggling under these circumstances seems to represent several related sentiments. On the one hand, it indicates a slight feeling of embarrassment over having discovered something or talked about something which would have been better left undiscovered and undiscussed. At the same time, it is an attempt to make light of the misfortune by suggesting that the speaker and those present should not be overly pained by what they are encountering. Giggling here serves very much the same kind of function as the phrase *maj pen raj* ("it is nothing") referred to earlier; it is a means of shrugging off and denying a feeling of distress. Finally, giggling often is also a kind of ironic commentary on the human situation—not in any abstract philosophical way, but in the sense that a tragedy is so often actually felt to be a comic exposure of human hopes and intentions. A little exchange between the writer and an elderly villager perhaps best illustrates this. During one of the two rainy seasons I spent in Thailand, the rains were especially heavy in the Central Plain and destroyed the rice crop of many Bang Chan farms. As might be expected, it was a topic of considerable discussion. Paddling down the canal one morning, we met a villager who was returning from inspecting his fields, and we stopped to chat. The discussion inevitably turned to the flood, and he told us, in a completely matter-of-fact way, that he had already lost about 50 percent of his crop. He then giggled nervously over what he had said, and followed it up with, "But that person over there has lost everything." His giggles then turned into laughter as he nodded his head in an attitude of pain. Months later, when things were considerably more comfortable for the villager (as it turned out, he had lost only about 5 percent of his crop) I recalled our meeting and asked him what he thought was so funny about the flood. He did not remember, but volunteered in a nice, didactic way: "When something like a flood happens, all you can do is laugh."

152 154 57 Giggling is also a favored mode of dealing with the countless situations that arise in daily life that are perceived by the villagers as potentially, or imminently, embarrassing. Here giggling is a substitute for an explanation of one's actions, particularly those that are considered annoying to others. Villagers who have missed an *important* appointment (lesser ones are missed with few qualms) will tend to giggle when they finally meet the person and there is the slightest indication of the latter's displeasure.

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Giggling is very often used in the marketplace when an item must be bargained over. Similarly, a villager who wants to quit working for another will usually preface his request with some giggling, although equally often he will just leave—saying absolutely nothing—and will later send a middleman to collect his wages and make the severance official. The latter alternative is prompted by the desire to avoid *all* awkwardness.

The third major form of the villagers' politeness—that associated with making a good impression on others—has to a certain extent been covered by the materials already presented. Thus, in terms of the actual manifestations, there is really little difference between flattering another person, for example, because it will make him feel good, because it will make getting something out of him much easier, or because it will make one appear much more attractive in his eyes. However, it is clear that the motivations in these three cases are all quite different. It is for this reason that this last category has been introduced. When villagers meet another person whom they regard as significant (and this by no means includes all their contacts) they do put forth considerable effort to make a good impression on him. And being polite—courteous, helpful, flattering—is one of the most suitable means for achieving this effect.

Discussion of this interactive mode would perhaps not be necessary were villagers themselves not so keenly aware of it. Village children are continually and consciously taught, by word and deed, the necessity always to put their best foot forward (cf. the earlier illustrations in *Characteristics of a Good Person*). Bang Chaners assess themselves and others in terms of their capacity to make themselves appealing: both the "good" and the "competent" person is one who can make himself attractive by speaking softly, gently, and if possible, beautifully and cleverly. Often villagers take offense at an individual who refuses to do this because his very refusal suggests that he does not feel respect for others. Again, it should be emphasized that we are talking here about the form of behavior, not the substance or commitment behind it.

What the ultimate psychological roots of this behavior are is unclear. It is apparent—largely because of the great attention given to formal considerations such as manners, proper speech, and the like—that this concern is not prompted primarily by the desire to be loved by others. Love would require a more substantial medium. Gaining the respect and approval of others is clearly an important component of the attitude, but one wonders why a people otherwise so self-loving and self-accepting should need their self-esteem repeatedly validated by others. Perhaps the most important reason behind the villagers' concern with impressing others really has little to do with the others themselves, although obviously at the behavioral level it implicates them—that is, I would suggest that the major factor behind the

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alone, he might have to wait months before an act of overt physical aggression actually occurred, or before an informant volunteered some of his reveries.[7] When these events do occur, it is exceedingly difficult for the analyst to assess how typical or deviant the event may be under the circumstances, whether it is characteristic of villagers of a particular age or sex and what other individuals may do or say in similar situations. Rather than depend upon what is essentially a "catch-as-catch-can" approach, the SCT brings the research problems to the informant and asks him to deal with them directly. It should be remembered that although the resulting data are not as naturalistic as observational materials, they are always the product of the villagers' own voluntaristic inclinations: their responses represent their own internal views of how to deal with the problems posed by the introductory phrases.

A corollary to the above is the fact that the SCT presents to a large number of individuals what are essentially the same stimulus situations. The primary advantage here is that it provides a solid empirical basis upon which to make statements about how typical or deviant a response may be.

The Selective Nature of the Responses

The third premise follows much of the preceding, but merits special consideration because of the cross-cultural phrasing of the study. In a sense, it is the basic methodological principle of all anthropological research.

In examining the SCT responses, it soon becomes apparent that the majority of our informants' statements make perfect sense and are the types of reactions that conceivably could be made by any human being. The word choice and style of many of the responses are of course inimitably Thai. For example, "*The most important thing in his life is* . . . ohhh! . . . having or not having something to eat. If you have something to eat: good. If you have nothing: trouble. We people are born in order to find things to fill our mouths and stomachs. Nobody can take his property and money with him when he dies." But the expressed meanings of the responses (in this case, practical survival) are not, despite perhaps anthropological expectations, alien or extraordinary.

The point to be emphasized is that although the villagers' SCT responses may not seem immediately familiar, they do fall well within the range of what is *objectively possible*. It is this element of objective possi-

[7] From an ethnographic point of view, the fact that such events do occur so rarely is not without significance. It is additional behavioral evidence of the amount of aggression control exercised by the villagers and of the fact that they prefer not to wear their hearts on their sleeves.

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"sweet speech." The second major response, representing 24 percent of the sample, is more generic in nature: it encompasses the trait of inciting other people to have arguments; the capacity to annoy people, in a manner akin to what is connoted by the American slang term, "to bug" a person; and the capacity actually to threaten others. The emphasis here is on intruding on the peace, stability, and self-concerns of other people. The last response, representing 10 percent of the sample, is interesting because of its rather non-psychological, highly practical, nature: people are disliked because they steal. Theft is something that one *hears* about in Bang Chan very frequently, but actual cases are almost never encountered. What its symbolic significance may be is unknown, unless it is simply a more concrete expression of the concern about the untrustworthiness of others.

The most striking characteristic of the above responses is that despite their diversity they almost all emphasize qualities that are directly interpersonal, rather than intrapersonal, in nature. There are no responses here which say that the most dislikable thing about a person is "his stupidity"; "his weakness"; "his incompetence." It is only when unattractiveness takes on a manifestly social dimension, when a person's activities can actually harm others, that most villagers become exercised. Otherwise, Bang Chaners seem to assume (and it is the assumption that is important) that a person can be any way he wants. To a large extent, this same assumption was implicit in the villagers' structuring of the previous item on "likable" qualities, and may help to explain why they often define positive qualities as the absence of negative ones. In that item, if a person could not be of direct help to the self or love the self (the major response), villagers desired that he deal with others in a "soft spoken" and gentle way (the second most frequent response) or at least lack offensive qualities (the third most frequent response). They seem to assume that it is better not to have a relationship at all than to have one that admits unpleasantness. Or, phrased in another way, they seem to assume that if a relationship is even to occur, it must be useful, pleasant, or harmless. What the person is otherwise like, outside of the relationship, is irrelevant to one's assessment of him.

This attention to the manifest nature of social relationships and to the necessity of keeping the relationships smooth and uncomplicated is revealed most sharply in the next two items, *"People who never show their feelings are . . ."* and *"It is sometimes good to hide your true feelings about a person because. . . ."* The latter item is clearly biased in the direction of sanctioning the social pose, and is valuable mainly for the kinds of justifications it reveals. The former item, however, has no evaluative connotations and permits villagers to respond in any direction. Examination of the responses indicates overwhelming agreement on the part of villagers about the desirability of hiding one's feelings. Eighty percent of

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*125 the sample responds approvingly; 12 percent responds disapprovingly
*128 (three quarters of whom are disturbed by the deceptiveness involved); and
*156 6 percent responds in a non-committed way. One of the non-committed is
• 152 almost literary as he describes a person who never shows his feelings as "a man who is like a sword in a scabbard." (His non-committment derives from the protective, as contrasted to the obviously aggressive, symbolism of the sword.)

In the majority group, more than half the informants describe people who hide their feelings as "good," "persons who do not want to cause trouble," "just men," and perhaps most cogently from a Thai point of view, "persons who realize that hiding one's feelings is a virtue that helps men to live together happily." Three of the majority informants, however, are

TABLE 16

People who never show their feelings are . . .
Khon *who never show their feelings are . . .*

APPROVAL:	80%	good people, because others do not know their feelings. thoughtful people. real men, serious men, men who do things seriously. careful people who do not want to cause trouble. people who do not want to be blamed. people who have very brave hearts.
DISAPPROVAL:	12%	bad people, because their mouths are one thing but their hearts are another.
NON-COMMITTAL:	6%	both good people and bad people.

more defensive in their justifications: they say that people who do not show their feelings do not want to be disliked or blamed by others. The balance of the majority (a dozen villagers) are the most expressive in their approval: they say that people who conceal their feelings are "patient," "brave," "pure," and "thoughtful." Their emphasis is on the highly desirable stoicism of such individuals.

Perhaps the most revealing aspect of the responses of the minority group who disapprove of the concealment of feelings is, again, the interpersonal point of departure that is used to evaluate the behavior. Such individuals are viewed mainly as deceptive, although one informant says they are cruel and another says that they are difficult to get along with. But nowhere is there any reference to the possibility of such concealment being undesirable because it makes psychic demands on the concealer or because it might be expressive of inadequacy on his part. There is no concern here

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over the possibility of these individuals being "fearful of others," "tight," or to use a readily available Thai term, *cuu cii* (compulsive, exacting). Why people do not show their feelings is their own business and their own problem (if not showing one's feelings could be thought of as a "problem"). As in the approving responses, the interpersonal effect of their behavior is what is most important.

The justifications with which villagers respond to the stimulus, *"It is sometimes good to hide your true feelings about a person because . . ."* are of three general, but closely related, types.

TABLE 17

It is sometimes good to hide your true feelings about a person because . . .
Sometimes it is good to hide true feelings about another **khon** ***because . . .***

AVOIDS ANGER:	37%	people will not be able to say that *raw* is not a good person; it makes them not angry with *raw* or dislike *raw*.
		he will not hate you.
		he will not detest *raw* and will give *raw* help.
		they will not hate *raw* in return.
AVOIDS TROUBLE:	26%	it prevents people from quarreling.
		it preserves friendships; it prevents quarrels and fights which break up friendships.
		there will be no trouble.
UNDERSCORING:	20%	it is not letting him see anything in our outward behavior. We don't let him see that we are angry and that we are controlling our feelings.
		you will not tell him what your true feelings are.
		it is bad if you do not hide your feelings.

The most frequent response, held by 37 percent of the villagers, is that by concealing their true feelings about another person that person will not dislike, hate, or be angry with them. Whether this response involves a projection (an unconscious attribution) onto others of their own aggressive feelings, which the concealment suggests to them they harbor, is uncertain. The response may simply reflect the omission of certain logical steps in the psychodynamic process, that is, "that if I did not conceal my feelings, and expressed what I felt, it could only lead to a series of events culminating in their hating me." It is interesting to note, however, that only one of all our informants makes the effort to point out that the point of the concealment may be to avoid hurting that other person ("it prevents the man from

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*125 *128 *156 • 152 having bad feelings and you do not lose anything"). All the other informants who are concerned about the other person (several are not) either invert the item to protect themselves or speak in more general terms of the concealment's value in preventing quarrels, preserving friendships, and the like. This kind of response is the second major justification, representing the responses of 26 percent of the sample: individuals holding this position point out that by not expressing their feelings, quarrels are precluded, "the work will not be messed up," and "cooperation and understanding" can be maintained. The third major group of informants, 20 percent of the sample, accept the value of concealing one's feelings as self-evident, and use the item to underscore the point. One informant offers a highly articulate justification for her concealment which, in its stoical overtones, is suggestive of some of the tenets of Buddhism: "one should not show one's happiness, attachment, or sorrow to anyone." Basic to this person's response is the emphasis in Buddhist doctrine on the ultimate psychological isolation of every soul.

The final item in this section, *"In his relations with people, the thing he is most careful of is . . ."* asks villagers to specify their major form of interpersonal anxiety. The "anxiety" here is intentionally low-keyed. Villagers are asked what they are careful of, not what they are frightened of.

TABLE 18

In his relations with people, the thing he is most careful of is . . .
In relations with other khon, *the thing* raw *is most careful of is (namely) . . .*

OWN BEHAVIOR (55%)		
NATURE OF WORDS:	37%	words and promises.
		that he speaks well (politely, pleasantly).
		that her words might be insulting to them.
		his own words.
MANNERS:	6%	his manners, his etiquette.
GOOD SELECTION:	6%	to try to associate with good people only.
OWN "HEART":	6%	his own feelings (mood), for fear that they will be angry with him.
OTHERS' BEHAVIOR (37%)		
THEFT:	13%	she is afraid they will steal her things.
		he is afraid that they might be thieves.
TREACHERY:	7%	he is afraid that they will double-cross *raw*.
PHYSICAL HARM:	6%	she is afraid they will attack her.

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Examination of the responses reveals two major reference points. Fifty-five percent of the sample responds in terms of what it is about their own behavior that makes them anxious; 37 percent respond in terms of what they are anxious about in the behavior of others toward them. Of those responses in the first category, the majority (in fact equal in number to all the responses in the second category) refer once more to the nature of their words. One informant sums up almost everything we have been saying about the villagers' concern with social cosmetics. He says that "*in his relations with people, the thing he is most careful of is* . . . not to talk about important matters." Other villagers point to words as the *sine qua non* of obtaining social admiration: one informant says that he is most careful of "talking. It is most important. If you talk well, people love you. If you talk badly people hate you"; another says, "his words; if a person does not speak well, he can't get anything from anybody; nobody loves him." Other informants anxious about their own behavior in this situation divide their responses equally (6 percent each) among three sub-categories: they say that they are most careful about having good manners; about being sure that they select only good, non-troublemaking individuals with whom to deal (involving an assumption that they do indeed have considerable control over the situations into which they place themselves); and a third group says that they are most careful about their own feelings and their own "hearts," indicating the concern they feel over controlling their own impulses in order to deal with others in a comfortable and amicable way.

Among the villagers who respond in terms of anxiety about what other people will do to them, the majority, 20 percent of the total sample, says that they are careful about other people stealing from them (13 percent) or being treacherous and cunning toward them (7 percent). Another 6 percent are careful lest others attack them and do them physical harm. The extremity of the replies of this sizable minority (26 percent) is perhaps what is most interesting, and somewhat surprising. The balance of responses in this category are mainly expressions of a diffuse wariness about the intentions of others ("he must keep watching and listening"; "that she must know whether they are good persons or not"), although two informants specify that they must be careful about the words, promises, or criticisms of others.

The foregoing discussion of the villagers' modes of "orienting toward others" may be summed up in the following manner. Despite the obvious tendency toward "multimodality," or high variability of response, on all items excepting the *"People who never show their feelings are . . ."* item, the villagers' reactions to the above stimuli go far in supporting our earlier remarks on the nature of social contact in Bang Chan. Villagers evaluate other people mainly in terms of how well they treat the self or how well

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*125 *128 *156 they manage not to harm the self. The interpersonal relationship is the major component of their evaluation in the sense that they are either indifferent to, or highly tolerant of, character traits of other people that exist outside the purview of their contact with them. In effect, villagers seem to assume that a person can be anything he wants to be, so long as his behavior is not detrimental to others. Villagers respond in a highly favorable manner to persons who conceal their feelings, and explain their approval by saying that such behavior helps minimize social conflict, particularly conflict of which they may be the object. Their commendation of people who control their feelings is extreme, taking the form of calling them "just," "good," "brave," "pure," and "thoughtful." In their interpersonal contacts, villagers say they are most careful about the effect of their words on others, and one informant presents what is perhaps the perfect summation of the role of politeness in their lives when he says that, in his relations with people, he is most careful "not to talk about important matters." For a sizable minority of villagers, the data also indicate a sense of untrustworthiness about the motives of others. The major forms of this lack of trust are that others will steal from or physically harm them, be treacherous, slander, or gossip about them. Our observational materials suggest that although their anxiety may have realistic foundation with regard to others gossiping about them, and perhaps slandering them, this would not be true in the case of others stealing or doing them physical harm. These fears are probably symbolic expressions of a more diffuse anxiety about harm to the self through the medium of interpersonal relationships. Whether anxiety about interpersonal relationships is indeed the major form of anxiety in Bang Chan will be investigated in the next section.

Anxiety and Reactions to Crises

121 152 In this section we are dealing with materials that present the most ticklish analytic problems we will encounter. We know from American culture that persons identify as sources of anxiety issues which are genuine existential problems (illness; payment of bills; how to deal with an arbitrary boss); issues which by most culturally "reasonable" standards should not be sources of anxiety, but which are nevertheless felt that way (how to obtain a beautiful or handsome figure with the least amount of effort); and issues which by both cultural and personal standards of "reasonableness" are not considered valid sources of anxiety, but which are nevertheless "understood" and tolerated (fear of thunder, wild animals, flying insects). In the last two cases, we know that the expressed anxiety usually symbolizes some other threat, which is considerably more crucial but unknown. And in the

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last instance, we know that the fanciful fear often serves the vital function of binding what might otherwise be extremely painful free-floating anxiety.[6] We also know from American culture that there are many objective sources of threat existing in the environment which are rarely identified as objects of anxiety, unless directly or imminently encountered, *e.g.*, being struck by an automobile. Finally, we know that there are objects or sources of anxiety that may be denied as such because of the cultural values associated with being fearful or brave: it is possible for a teen-ager to admit anxiety over an examination or an important "date," but usually not when he is asked to perform a daring deed by a group of his peers.

The point of these remarks is that despite our familiarity with the various forms and functions of anxiety, we are still hard put in most instances to identify the precise psychodynamic role of an anxiety response when it is expressed by individuals in our own culture. The problem is compounded immeasurably when we attempt to do this with members of another culture. It is for this reason that the responses below will be accepted as those things which actually frighten or worry the villagers of Bang Chan, and will not be examined for any intrapsychic functions that they may serve. The few interpretive excursions of this type that we took earlier in the text (e.g., the villagers' concern about a superior feeding them well) were sanctioned principally by the context in which the responses were made. Here, informants are asked to indicate their anxieties under a completely unspecified set of conditions.

Actually, most of the responses given below are, in terms of the villagers' culturally constituted reality, of a highly reasonable nature, suggesting that informants are reacting in terms of their genuine existential concerns. Being bitten by a cobra is a dangerous (although not a likely) possibility, and although a few villagers may hesitate *on direct questioning* to declare their belief in malevolent spirits (translated below as "ghosts"), all know about such spirits and at one time or another have performed acts to propitiate them, indicating considerable psychic investment in their reality. Although in some cases one might wonder about the motivations behind them, the responses make complete sense.

The responses to the first item, "*He was most afraid of . . .*" fall into three major categories. The vast majority of villagers (61 percent) are frightened by experiences, actually *possibilities* (and again, in their unpredictable world, the possible is psychologically critical) which threaten

[6] The major analytic difference between *anxiety* and *fear* is, in fact, that the latter is "bound" anxiety, *i.e.*, the anxiety has assumed a concrete, objective representation which the individual at least can deal with: by avoidance, doing battle with it, laughing over it, and the like.

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their physical well-being.[7] They specify such threats as poverty (15 informants), not having enough to eat (11), illness (4), flood and fire (3), death (3), and being bitten by poisonous snakes (2). There is no significant difference in the economic statuses of individuals who mention either poverty or famine as their greatest fear. While there are six references to these fears on the part of "poor" villagers, there are sixteen references on the part of "average" villagers and four references on the part of "rich" villagers, all accurate reflections of their representation in the sample. The second major category of responses, held by 20 percent of the informants, describe the actions of people as the source of greatest fear. In all cases, these refer to actions of people other than the self, and the reference in more than half the responses is specifically to thieves. In a few cases, younger informants speak of their parents scolding them or beating them. As suggested earlier, no villager recognizes any personal inadequacies as sources of fear, although the idiosyncratic *karma* (or *kam*) response, mentioned below, suggests this in a superficial way. In this regard, it might be noted that three informants assert that they are afraid of nothing. The third category, encompassing the responses of 10 percent of the villagers, mentions malevolent spirits as the sources of greatest fear. Interestingly, one of these informants tries to pooh-pooh her fear by noting that if there were no way to escape the spirit she could manage.

From the point of view of one of the major concerns of this book, the most significant finding of the above data, replicated in part and in an even more apposite way in the next item, is that only a minority of villagers admit to any fear, symbolic or otherwise, of the actions of other persons, and none indicate any anxiety over their own actions toward others. The relevance of this finding is, of course, that it places our earlier remarks in the "Orienting Toward Others" section in proper perspective. In that section, where we were concerned explicitly with interpersonal relationships, it was perhaps inevitable that the interpersonal mode of anxiety would loom large. Here, however, villagers are permitted to express any kind of anxiety—physical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, fanciful, magical—and only a minority do indeed give their anxiety an interpersonal form. In this connection, a remark made much earlier in the text might be recalled. In discussing the uneasiness that villagers frequently betray in their interpersonal contacts (nervous laughter and concern with inconsequential

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[7] By way of general intellectual interest, it might be noted that this finding, as well as the one emerging from our next item, offers strong support to some "admittedly impressionistic and unverified" observations of Skinner (1957: 309–310) who, in discussing the major concerns of the lower class Thai members of Bangkok society, who are mainly transplanted peasants, singles out as primary their concern with "basic well-being, *i.e.*, the health and safety of the organism."

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TABLE 19

He was most afraid of . . .
The thing raw is most afraid of is (namely) . . .

THREATS TO PHYSICAL WELL-BEING:	61%	poverty. If he had enough, he would not be afraid.
		having nothing to eat. I mean when there is a flood, and all the paddy is lost, and we will starve because there is no rice to eat.
		not having enough to eat.
		having fever; getting sick and having no money.
		fire, because when a house catches fire it is a great loss.
		death.
		snakes. He is not afraid of ghosts. He can walk in the dark. But snakes are dangerous. He does not like to go anywhere after dark.
ACTIONS OF OTHERS:	20%	people. When she had money, she was afraid she would be robbed. When she did not have any, she was in difficulty.
		her father beating her.
MALEVOLENT SPIRITS:	10%	ghosts; but if there were no choice (no place to go, no way to get out of the situation), then she could manage.
		death; of ghosts haunting him. If the ghosts don't haunt him, he is not afraid.

topics) it was noted that, "uneasiness, when it occurs, is accepted as a social psychological fact of life; it is not felt as a threat to the integrity of the personality." The data here would tend to reinforce that conclusion. At the same time, however, it must be remembered that 20 percent of the informants do give what is at least symbolic expression to their fear of others, and it would, therefore, be most inappropriate to go to the other extreme and assert that villagers have no anxiety about interpersonal relationships. I also noted in the earlier discussion that "the nervousness that is betrayed indicates some of the internal strain that villagers undergo in having to maintain a constant front of politeness." This appears to be a case of their simply accepting—without worry, shame, or any other secondary anxiety—their own shortcomings. The anxiety that is experienced is just not *felt* as a psychological burden.

One of the responses above, although idiosyncratic, merits attention. This is the response of the villager, age 52, who says that she is frightened by her *karma*: "it depends on *raw*'s mind [or heart]. Some people are afraid of ghosts. They see things and they believe that they see ghosts. That is not right. They see falling leaves and they think that is a ghost. There is nothing when they approach. The most frightening thing is bad *karma*. It

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follows you. If you kill a living thing in this life, a living thing will kill you in the next life." What is surprising is that there are not more responses of this type, especially from older villagers. The psychological significance of this kind of response is of course most difficult to assess. Although on the surface it is an expression of personal inadequacy—an expression that the informant has not done as well for herself as she could have—its essentially timeless and unpredictable quality (one never knows when the product of bad *kam* will issue) almost takes it out of the sphere of direct emotional import. It is in fact an inordinately intellectualized response, probably just as expressive of the informant's sense of psychological security as it is expressive of her anxiety. Although bad *kam* is an omnipresent and unavoidable anxiety, the fact that one can make merit to reduce such *kam* and the possibility that one might in fact have less bad *kam* than one's anxiety would lead one to believe (one never knows) is a source of considerable psychological comfort.

The next item, *"His greatest problem was . . ."* is somewhat more cerebral and reflective than the preceding one. Villagers are asked to indicate not what frightens them, but what worries and generally concerns them. Thus, although their responses are in many ways similar to those given on the previous item, they are also considerably less extreme. All reference to malevolent spirits, for example, is missing here. Again, the majority of villagers (57 percent) describe as their greatest problem their well-being and survival. Their responses, however, lack the sense of trepidation that colored their earlier replies. Here, twelve villagers phrase their replies in terms of worrying about obtaining money, being rich, having money to spend, and the like, rather than in the more plaintive terms of being anxious about poverty, a response given by only one villager. Thirteen informants also say that they are worried about "making a living" or their "work," responses that are more ambiguous than the above in that it is difficult to determine whether villagers are worried about having sufficient income from the work or are disturbed by difficulties involved in the work itself (how their rice crop is coming along). Nine informants say that they are worried about starving, not having enough to eat; one is worried about illness; one about floods; and none about death or poisonous snakes. The reappearance of the food response should not of course be overlooked.

The second major category, encompassing the responses of 24 percent of the sample, relates to worrying about other people. However, almost half these responses (11 percent of the total) are protective and succoring responses, where ego is concerned with preventing harm to his family. The other 13 percent describe ego's concern about getting along with other people. Two of these responses refer explicitly to the informant's worry over the words he chooses in relating to others or that he speak sensibly.

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TABLE 20

His greatest problem was . . . *Raw greatest problem is (namely) . . .*		
SURVIVAL:	57%	how to have money to spend and not starve. earning his living, day after day, and finding money to spend. her occupation; which career was good for her, and also continuing to do it. making his living in the future. rice and fish: food. If one does not have enough to eat, life is difficult. having money and food to eat.
WORRY OVER OTHERS (24%) "PROTECTIVE":	11%	the happiness of *raw* family. the complicated events in the nation that brought trouble to his family.
"GETTING ALONG WITH":	13%	relations with people. ("Going to visit people and have them visit us.") if it concerns the affairs of other people's hearts, we cannot solve it.
HAPPINESS:	8%	how to be rich. When one has money, one has happiness.

Interestingly, these two completions reflect ego's concern about his own capacity for dealing with others, not about how others might affect him. Also, in contrast to the preceding item, few of the responses in this category seem symbolic of any interpersonal anxiety that the villagers might feel. Here when a villager says, "*His greatest problem was* . . . his relations with people," or ". . . when she got married, she was afraid of trouble," the villager is pointing directly at the cause of his anxiety.[8] In the second response, incidentally, the cause of worry may not be relationships with other people so much as it is the burdens which such relationships create: having to be responsible for and responsive to others; having to make oneself get along with them; and in this case, with the informant a young female, perhaps the burden of having children and the loss of personal freedom that this inevitably involves.

The fact that so few (but nevertheless some) villagers structure this item in terms of interpersonal problems is, of course, congruent with the

[8] On the other hand, some of the responses describing anxiety over lack of food and rice might be expressive of an anxiety over loss of self-esteem, *i.e.*, individuals who have no food are incompetent and must depend on others. Three informants (two of "average" economic status and one "poor") actually make this point explicit: ". . . what to do to have something to eat and not starve. Starvation, in addition to being uncomfortable, makes one feel ashamed in front of one's neighbors."

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findings of the previous item, as is the fact that the majority structure it in terms of survival issues. The relative differences between the two items in the percentage of individuals holding these views (20 percent vs. 13 percent regarding interpersonal anxieties; 61 percent vs. 57 percent regarding survival anxieties) are obviously not significant.

The remaining responses on this item resist easy categorization. Eight percent of the villagers speak in general terms about their greatest problem being their desire for happiness, a response whose major significance is probably the fact that it is given by such a small number of persons. This is not to suggest that the majority of villagers are either happy or unhappy; it is simply to indicate that few have the need to articulate a general sense of unhappiness. (Indeed, from a few of the items in the "Dominant Drives and Wishes" section, it is clear that a sizable minority of villagers feel that given the possibilities of this world, they are in fact quite content. See particularly the item, *"He wishes he were. . . ."*) A few villagers here, both young males, also speak about the uncertainty of their futures as sources of worry. One villager says that her greatest problem is that she wants too much, suggesting a desire on her part for greater self-control.

The remaining items in this section are of a different order from the above. They ask villagers to describe how they would react to frightening or worrisome situations. The items are, *"If one is frightened, the best thing to do is . . ."* and *"When something worried him, he usually. . . ."* One of the more interesting attributes of the responses to both items is the sense of familiarity with these situations that they reveal. The responses are pointed, emotionally loaded (although not excessively so), and unembarrassed, suggesting again the villagers' tolerance of their own existential limitations. Their emotional tone also suggests that my assistant was originally correct when he said that it was "easy" for villagers to express their feelings of fear. In both cases, the responses tend to follow a bi-modal distribution, although the two modes are clearly related to each other psychologically.

To *"If one is frightened, the best thing to do is . . ."* 40 percent of the informants respond by saying that they would keep cool, calm, and *chəəj*. However, what is intriguing is that this is all that they would do. Their aim is to get their emotions back under control, their personal stability being paramount to any other consideration, such as discovering what caused the fright, how they might deal with the cause, or fighting that cause. The other major response, held by 31 percent of the villagers, is to express dependency. However, what is most important here is that this is a metaphorical dependency, involving seeking help from the Lord Buddha or from Allah (for Moslems) or from one's "soul-stuff," rather than from other human beings.

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human beings. In fact, the absence of any reference to other human beings, especially parents, is striking.

Of the seventeen persons who ask for supernatural help, seven, all women, explicitly say that they would call their *khwaan* (or "soul-stuff") back. Since this is a distinctively Thai concept, it merits a few words of explanation. Thai ontology holds that every individual is inhabited by a *khwaan*, who during childhood (when the individual is unstable and immature) or during a crisis can escape the body through an invisible hole in the head. One of the major functions of the top-knot worn by half the children of Bang Chan is to cover the invisible hole so that the *khwaan*

TABLE 21

If one is frightened, the best thing to do is . . .
If raw is frightened, the best thing raw ought to do is (namely) . . .

EQUANIMITY:	40%	to keep his heart calm.
		to pull yourself together (to try to compose yourself). Sometimes, just run away.
		to control oneself.
		to control your emotions until they are better.
		to stay *chɔɔj-chɔɔj*.
DEPENDENCY:	31%	to exclaim, "Lord help me!"
		to call one's soul-stuff back; call upon God, Allah.
		to think of Lord Buddha, his teaching, and his priests.
		to sometimes exclaim, *"phra chuaj"* ("Lord Buddha, or Buddhism, or monks—help me.")
FLIGHT:	8%	to avoid the situation; to run away.

cannot escape; also most life-cycle ceremonies have a special ritual devoted to "calling the *khwaan*," who although obviously not absent from the individual at the time, is called to reaffirm the necessity of his being in his place when the individual needs him most. At the same time, the formal ritual of "calling the *khwaan*" memorializes the fact that the *khwaan* is in his proper place, thus indicating that the individual in whom he resides has had the internal stability to reach the point in life that he has in fact reached. The "calling of the *khwaan*" is usually, although not always, performed by women, which might explain why all the villagers who give this response are female. The *khwaan* has four crucial attributes: (1) although he is of the self, he does have an independent existence of his own; (2) he is that part of the self that gives the self stability, and from an analytic point of view, is really an objectification of human stability; (3) he

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774 is recognized to be capricious; and (4) his departure from the body is both cause and effect of the loss of one's wits, steadiness, and equilibrium. If the *khwaan* stays away too long, the individual may become deranged and may die.

*125 *128 • 152 181 828 In these terms, the seven individuals who say that when they are frightened they would call back their "soul-stuff" seem to be expressing two related needs: a recognition of their ultimate dependence on supernatural forces and, very much like the majority group of informants, a preoccupation with psychological stability. There is in fact implicit to these responses almost an assumption that one of the marks of an adult, civilized "human being" (in its basic ontological sense) is the achievement of stability, orderliness, and stoicism in a universe—both inner and outer—that at any time may regress to a more primitive, chaotic state. The great attention that villagers give to being *riab-rɔɔj* (neat, clean, well-organized in appearance, demeanor, and speech); the fact that they often distinguish between adults and children in terms of the disorganization and randomness of the latter's behavior; the very fact that an individual's *khwaan* is most wayward during childhood; the high value that is placed upon being *chɔɔj* and the negative value that is placed on having a "hot heart" (*caj rɔɔn*) are all expressive of this assumption.

*125 *128 152 There are a few other categories of response to the above item that should be mentioned, although none is held by more than 8 percent of the sample. Four villagers say that the best thing to do when frightened is to run away; three villagers assert that they are never frightened; three do say that they would investigate the cause of the fright, indicating that this response is not completely lacking in Bang Chan; two say that they would comfort themselves; two are simply afraid; and two more have no idea of what to do under the circumstances.

To the item, *"When something worried him, he usually . . ."* 45 percent of the sample responds by saying that they would feel anxious, uneasy, uncomfortable, or unhappy. In essence, they seek no solution to their hypothetical problem, but simply accept the state of anxiety that has been created. For a few of them, the anxiety is extreme: they say they "could not eat, could not sleep, could not work," a response that I have heard several times in Bang Chan from villagers who were actually worrying through a problem. The other major response, held by 40 percent of the sample, is to perseverate over the problem: to keep thinking about it, to think about it constantly, or, as one villager expresses it, *"When something worried him, he usually . . .* thought about it. Sometimes he dreamt of it too."

The major theme of both the above responses is, of course, that although villagers handle their worries in an emotionally meaningful way,

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TABLE 22

When something worried him, he usually . . . / *When something worries* raw, raw, *usually . . .*		
DISCOMFORT:	45%	felt rather uneasy about it. was worried, anxious and uncomfortable. suffered and felt down in the dumps. was anxious; wanted to know what would come next.
PERSEVERATION:	40%	paid attention to it; continually thought of it. thought of it and worried about it all the time. could not go anywhere until she solved the problem first. kept thinking about it; couldn't do other things easily because he couldn't help thinking about it.
SOLUTION:	6%	had to go and find the truth (find out whether the thing that was worrying him was true or not).
NO WORRIES:	6%	he has never been worried, so he does not know.

they never really resolve them or even hold out the hope of resolving them. They simply accept worry as an inherent, enervating, but tolerable part of their experience.

The minority responses here are not wholly insignificant: 6 percent of the informants do describe a happy solution of their problem in that they "find a way out," or "try to settle it first before going somewhere else"; 6 percent claim that they never worry; and a few say that although they worry, they try not to show it.

This section on "anxiety" may be summarized in the following way. In answer to a question posed at the end of the last section, the data indicate that anxiety about interpersonal relationships is not the major anxiety of the villagers. Rather, the responses of the majority of the informants focus on matters relating to survival and the physical and material well-being of the individual. However, a noteworthy minority, averaging 16 percent of the sample, do reveal symbolic or direct anxiety about their interpersonal relationships, suggesting that beneath the affable or *chəəj* exteriors of at least a few villagers there is some distress about the social psychological pressures placed upon them. On the other hand, when we consider that for most human beings the most important fact about the environment is the presence in that environment of other human beings and the pressures that they inevitably place upon the individual, it is impressive that a larger number of villagers do not phrase their anxieties in interpersonal terms. The only possible explanation for this is that most Bang Chaners feel a

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fundamental security about their own *psychological* worth. This is undoubtedly abetted by the fact that the modes of social interaction in Bang Chan do not demand too much from the individual, as well as the fact that the individual, with his profound sense of free choice, often ignores or isolates himself from the impingements of others. (That a stance of psychic isolation is not necessarily maladaptive will be discussed in the final chapter.) When asked how they would react to frightening or worrisome situations, most villagers respond in terms of maintaining their inner psychic stability and in terms of accepting and tolerating these familiar psychic pressures. Their responses are non-constructive, but are highly congruent with their passive and secure orientations to the world. Their responses to "anxiety" tend toward psychological "unimodality" at an interpretive level, although in the last two cases the descriptive similarity of the responses first suggest a bi-modal distribution.

Aggression: Causes and Reactions

Analyzing "aggression" in Bang Chan is very much like analyzing "sex" in contemporary American culture. The category represents at one and the same time one of the most obvious and one of the most convoluted areas of the villagers' psychological lives.

The most obvious fact about aggression in Bang Chan is that villagers cannot tolerate its spontaneous, direct expression in face-to-face relationships. This is demonstrated not only by the general absence of overt aggression in such relationships but by the elaborate array of devices that villagers use to control its expression: giggling when making or receiving an untoward request, using a go-between to soften the demand of an interpersonal lien, leaving the field at the slightest hint of provocation (whether the provocation is intended or not), as well as the more general use of flattery, comedy, and self-effacement (*kreeŋcaj*). The repeated use of these devices as well as the villagers' evaluations of "people who never show their feelings" (see tables 16 and 17) reveal their sensitivity to aggression as a latent, but intrinsic, attribute of most social encounters. In fact, their evaluations of people who inhibit their feelings—or their *assumptions* about the inherently hostile nature of such feelings—suggest that their recognition of the potentiality of aggression (whether in themselves or others) is quite conscious.

The net result of these orientations is to give face-to-face contacts an aura of surface pleasantness, but at the same time a high degree of brittleness. Over and over again, villagers indicate that they prefer not to have any relationship at all than to have one that is even tinged with hostility.

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Thus, in explaining why he loves one of his closest friends, a villager says: 152 156* 571

> We love each other because we never contradict each other or disagree. [572] That is why we love each other. If we disagreed, there would be no love. [Investigator: "It is normal sometimes even for close friends to disagree. About what kind of things do you and your close friend disagree?"] We never disagree. Only people who are drunkards and take opium disagree. That is why our friendship has lasted so long. [Investigator: "What would happen if you disagreed?"] We would not love each other, and maybe he would take revenge on me.

In another place, this same informant says of his relationship with his wife: [593] "My wife and I never quarrel. If we quarreled, we would have to separate. There would be nothing to divide—except the children." As indicated earlier, many villagers, fearing the volatility of a quarrel, actually do separate, often even before the dispute gets going. Similarly, individuals, particularly if they are in subordinate positions, hesitate even to approach others lest they stimulate, let alone elicit, anger. Villagers will hesitate to approach others even if they are not the object, but simply a possible catalyst, of another's potential aggression: witness the cases of the land sale deal and the broken noria cited earlier. Note that in these cases it is not manifest aggression but merely the anticipation of it that inhibits villagers from initiating or maintaining interpersonal involvements.

Although villagers decline to express or to be exposed to direct aggression, they do have several indirect, if somewhat more complicated, ways of venting these feelings. Of these, the simplest is to gossip nastily *about* people. The frequency of this characteristic peasant activity is considerable in the village: in fact, an uncharitable observer might, on the basis of Bang Chan, just as readily entitle a book about Thailand *Land of Gossip* as *Land of Smiles*. However, the very frequency of gossip seems to mitigate its intensity or effect. Villagers are so accustomed to it that it is almost a *way* of talking, a style of speech. And as is the case with much village speech, villagers listen to, but do not necessarily believe, the nasty things one person might say about another. Also, excepting those cases where a person's complaints are either realistic or justifiable, people are just as likely to listen to an individual's gossip for what it says about him as for what it says about the person whom he is criticizing. None of this is to suggest that the person gossiping does not attain release, or that the person about whom he is gossiping, *if* he found out, would not be hurt or peeved. Rather, it is the situation in which the hostility is expressed that mitigates its effect. 152 571 521

Less frequent and more painful than the above are the formal, almost 152 571

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152 571 ritualized, ways of expressing hostility. What is significant about these particular procedures is that their very formalism serves to keep the aggression controlled and within bounds. Thus, everybody knows precisely how to behave when a buffalo disappears in the middle of the night and an intermediary arrives the next day to arrange the price for its return. Similarly, the aggressor, his victim, and everyone else present knows what is meant when someone calls a dog by the name of a person who is within hearing range and claims it was simply a slip of the tongue. The victim might respond by stealing his antagonist's boat and returning it a few weeks later, after his adversary has suffered sufficient anxiety. Note that in all these cases a face-to-face confrontation is either avoided or concealed.

152 571 754 Related to the above is the use of magical aggression. Textor (1960) points out that magical aggression—from one *person* to another *person*—is on the wane in Bang Chan. Also, it is clear from his exhaustive inventory of the magical practices in the village that interpersonal aggression has a very minor part in what is otherwise an extremely elaborate belief and ritual system: there are no more than three or four supernatural "objects," out of more than one hundred and seventy, that even suggest witchcraft, and although these objects are considered highly potent, they are rarely used. Even in the most extreme case—a young man using the oil from the chin of a corpse to induce hysteria in a maiden who has rebuffed his advances[9]—the victim is held partially responsible for having succumbed to the magic, a consideration that diminishes the "magical" implications of the ritual.[10]

152 762 Finally, a word should be said about the most convoluted way of expressing aggression. This is suicide, a procedure which, obviously, is applicable to only a small number of people. Nevertheless, during the relatively brief period that I was in the field, three Bang Chaners (out of a population of 1,771) attempted to do away with themselves by hanging. They always selected a conspicuous place (a tree on the Minburi highway or over the main canal) and were always unsuccessful. The aggression here is convoluted not only because it is turned inward, but also because it is

[9] This blending of sex and aggression does not have the same meaning in Bang Chan as it has in the West. Although the young man is concerned with punishing the girl for not responding to him, he is more concerned with breaking down her defenses and equilibrium, the very factors which denied him access. In English terminology, he wants to "unhinge" her, with all the duality that such symbolism might imply.

[789] [10] While magical aggression between people is relatively minor, magical means of averting aggression by non-human forces is not. In fact, the largest number of magical practices in Bang Chan relate to protecting the health and welfare of the organism from malevolent spirits, accidents, and dangerous animals. These data, of course, are quite consistent with the SCT data on "anxiety," presented in the preceding section.

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intended to hurt others. The explicit justification in all three suicide attempts was to make a spouse feel "sorry and unhappy." [152] [762]

What is perhaps most intriguing about all these naturalistic ways of expressing aggression (even the last, which, despite its drama, is attempted, not actual, suicide) is that in their formalism and indirection they are actually quite flaccid. An obvious question, therefore, is whether the villagers' aggressive tendencies are, at bottom, quite weak, or whether they are simply bottled up, never to emerge in any but controlled and disguised ways. The answer to this question seems to be "both," depending upon one's analytic perspective. On the one hand, the villagers are so attentive in their relationships to shutting off aggression before it gets up a head of steam, that these relationships provide little basis—in an objective, realistic sense—for the development of aggressive feelings. When a potentially hostile act does not even take place, there is simply no reason to feel angry, other than perhaps to be angered because one's anticipations have been frustrated. However, the likelihood that overt hostility will be suppressed is itself so expectable that such secondary anger, if present, is minimal. Further, the villagers' self-concern is so great that they simply do not have that much to gain, psycho-dynamically, from being intensely angry at others. An act of interpersonal aggression assumes emotional investment in others (or obversely, that others provide the self with major emotional satisfaction). If such investment is hesitant, guarded, or otherwise weakened—as almost all of our materials have indicated—the aggression that normally accompanies that investment, or is allowed by it, will also be weakened. Simply stated: it is difficult for a person to be angry at people with whom he does not have much of an emotional relationship. [156]*

On the other hand, the great attention that villagers give to the control of aggression indicates that they are by no means at peace with these feelings. In fact, what is most impressive about aggression in Bang Chan is not its absence, but the amount and kinds of control that are exercised over it. This very process of control probably intensifies whatever "realistically derived" aggressive feelings they already harbor. Thus, although their overt social behavior does not provide a basis for the development of aggressive feelings, their covert behavior—vis-à-vis themselves—certainly does. [156]*

The fundamental issue, of course, is why villagers should be so concerned with controlling their aggressions in the first instance. This is not an easy question to answer. However, there are at least three considerations which, if taken together, might account for it. First, much of their aggression control might derive from the more generalized fear of losing equilibrium—of "falling apart" or becoming psychically disassembled; of

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losing their *khwaam*, as it were—if they release their anger. This is the fear of "letting go" and of regressing to a primitive psychological state. Every impulse of an adult villager is to fight this tendency. Second, by controlling their aggressions, they are not imposing their own problems on others and are maintaining the attitudes of "respect" and tolerance—as well as emotional indifference—that are otherwise so important to them. This consideration obviously does not account for the absence of aggression; it simply points up the fact that the aggression that does exist is dealt with internally, rather than socially. Finally, their aggression control seems to be based upon fear of reprisal. Although in a few instances this may be a realistic fear, it is principally a straightforward projection: they know only too well how painful the reprisals would be of people who hold the feelings of hostility that they themselves hold. This consideration is not inconsistent with my earlier remarks on the difficulty villagers have in investing hostility in others. Rather, it follows directly: the villagers' difficulty is not based upon lack of hostility, but upon the lack of social relationships which are sufficiently meaningful to merit that hostility. Rather than work out their aggressions behaviorally—in and with other human beings—they work them out in the isolation of their own inner psychodynamics.

I have gone into considerable detail here because "aggression" is the one area of the villagers' lives where the meaning of behavior is not at all apparent from its manifestations. Without such background material, the following SCT results would probably also have little significance.

The first item, "*He most often gets angry when . . .*," reveals some of those patterns with unexpected clarity. Ostensibly, the item asks informants simply to identify the various sources of aggression. However, the term for "angry" (*krood*) in this sentence explicitly means "angry toward other people." [11] Thus, one would expect villagers to focus on the activities or characteristics of others—or, at minimum, on some dimension of a social relationship—which elicits their ire. However, their most frequent response is to ignore the semantic pressure to refer to others and to dwell on characteristics within themselves that cause their anger. Thirty percent of

[11] The importance of this point becomes apparent when *krood* is contrasted with some of the other "angrys" in the Thai lexicon: *moohoo*, angry at the situation in which one is entangled rather than toward another person; *chun*, angry at the action of another person, but not the person himself, with a suggestion of helplessness (the blast of a radio as one is falling asleep); *chiw*, to *feel* angry at another person, but to conceal its expression; *moohoochunchiaw*, angry all the time, at anything, because one has a character trait to be angry; *khunkheen*, revengeful. That the villagers should have such a rich set of lexical contrasts in this area—and I have excluded terms which are simply variations on the intensity of "angry" ("irritated" vs. "enraged")—is not without significance. "Anger" obviously is an emotion to which villagers attend.

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the sample responds in this manner. Thus, they say that they are hostile toward other people when they themselves are "in a bad mood and tired," "are rattled," "have done wrong," or "are old. When one gets old, one's tongue becomes sharp and one gets angry easily." The emphasis on the loss of control or psychic equilibrium can be noted here, as well as the fact that although these disequilibrium forces are in themselves not very extreme, they are presented as ample justification for anger. Even when villagers do mention others, it is not in reference to others' actions so much as it is in reference to the emotions that those actions elicit, that is, *"He most often gets angry at other people when* . . . he is cross, such as, when other people are infuriating or annoying."

125* 128* 152* 156*

TABLE 23

***He most often gets angry when* . . .**
Khon *most often get angry at other people when* . . .

SELF-REFERENCE:	30%	when *raw* make an error in the work. I, too, get angry. she has done something wrong. he is in a temper. he is drinking, drunk. If he is not drunk he does not become angry easily.
OTHERS DO NOT SATISFY SELF:	19%	they disobey him. they are not good to her.
GOSSIP:	23%	people say bad things about him. other people accuse him about something that has no truth.
QUARRELING:	23%	they quarrel. he has no happiness; when other people molest him often.

Related to the above are the responses given by 19 percent of the sample which, although referring to others, focus not on any objective negative quality or action of others (as in the two categories to follow) but on the simple fact that others do not satisfy the wishes and demands of the self. Again, the self—its needs, value, and significance—is primary. Villagers falling in this category say that they are most often angry at others when "people do not do what *raw* have told them to do," "they are not good to her," "people do not do things according to my wish." Informants giving these responses fall in all age and socioeconomic categories, suggesting that they are not necessarily the attitudes of social superordinates, which an older age or "wealthy" economic position might otherwise imply.

[828]

The final two categories, each representing 23 percent of the sample, describe as the causes of anger the direct actions of others. In one case,

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*125 others deride and gossip about the self: "people speak of him in an envious
*128 way"; "they blame her according to what is not true." In the other case,
*152 people quarrel, scold, and otherwise aggress overtly toward one another:
*156 "people come to look for trouble and damn him"; "people pick a quarrel with her." It might be added that excepting two villagers, none of the overt hostility specified by the villagers is even suggestive of physical aggression. More important, there are no completions at all which are suggestive of Bang Chaners being angry because they have been taken advantage of or because their competence has been challenged or threatened. There are no thoughts on the order of: "when they have pulled a fast one on him"; "when he has been tricked"; "when he has been cheated." The point is important because being tricked, cheated, or otherwise "one-upped" are events which some Western observers (leMay 1930, Textor 1959) have seen as occurring with considerable frequency in Thailand. The point has been implied in a few places in this book as well. These data would suggest that although such events occur, in a behavioral sense, they have little *motivational* significance to the villagers; that is, villagers seem to assume that an act of trickery or cheating is not necessarily prompted by the desire to hurt or to be hostile toward others. To them, the intrinsic attribute of trickery or cheating is self-advancement, not aggression or a sense of evil. These latter elements are by-products, and they are not so much by-products of the cheater's motivations as they are of the situation into which the cheated party was foolish enough to place himself. *If* the cheated party were to feel anger in such a situation it would be toward himself, not toward the individual who simply "took advantage of a good opportunity."

The next two items ask for the villagers' reactions to being annoyed and insulted by others. Since these two experiences are essentially intensity variations on the same theme, they will be dealt with together.

The overwhelming response of the villagers to both experiences is to avoid action and to respond internally with emotion and feeling. This is the response of 66 percent of the sample to *"When people annoy me, I . . ."* and 69 percent to *"When he insulted me, I. . . ."* (Note that in the original Thai the annoyance is explicitly interpersonal; the insult, although not explicitly interpersonal, assumes a human agent.) Even when villagers do act out their responses in behavior it is mainly to flee, avoid, or get away from the annoyance (20 percent) or to improve themselves *in order* not to merit the insult (14 percent). Thus, even in these variant cases, there is no contact between the annoyer or insulter and the self, and informants, although acting out their responses, do so in isolation. Only three villagers indicate any propensity to retaliate against others (and, by definition, deal with them directly and overtly: they scold their annoyers)

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while another three, in inimitable Thai fashion, hedge their retaliations with conditions, or phrase them as intentions ("I would scold them if I could"; "I would like to rail at them, but I am not sure I can."). 125* 128* 152* 156*

In the item, *"When people annoy me, I . . . ,"* 43 percent of the sample responds either by feeling angry or by indicating that they dislike being annoyed. The majority of these informants state their anger or dislike flatly, although a few justify it by adding that the anger or its external

TABLE 24

When people annoy me, I . . .
***When someone annoys* raw, raw . . .**

EMOTION (66%)		
ANGER:	43%	am slightly angry. seethe inside. feel annoyed because I want to stay peaceful and cannot. dislike them. feel angry at them and I want them to go away quickly.
NO FEELINGS:	10%	well, well, I feel *chɔɔj-chɔɔj*. Nothing happens. have no feelings about being annoyed.
DEPRESSION:	13%	my heart and feelings are unhappy. am down in the dumps.
ACTION (30%)		
LEAVE THE FIELD:	20%	want to be far away. I don't want to be annoyed. want to get away from them. run away to find peace somewhere else.
ACTUAL RETALIATION:	5%	rail at them. Why should I spare them? They are not my parents.
INTENDED RETALIATION:	5%	scold them to stop annoying *raw*. If *raw* can find some way to make them stop annoying, *raw* will do it.

cause prevents them from "being at peace." Different from the above in content, but similar in its emphasis on inactivity, is the response of 10 percent of the villagers who say either that they have no feelings about being annoyed or simply feel *chɔɔj-chɔɔj*. In effect, these informants avoid or deny any reaction to the experience. Another 13 percent are also inactive, but instead of responding with stoicism or indifference, they perceive the annoyance as cause for feeling depressed and unhappy. Although not a complete withdrawal, as is the case in the category to follow, the response is another example of the villagers' emotional passivity in

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 193]

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TABLE 25

*125 *When he insulted me, I . . .*
*128 *When there is an insult to* raw, raw . . .
*152
*156

EMOTION (69%)		
ANGER:	40%	felt *rapkiad* (disgusted or repelled by what the insulter did) and I did not want to speak with her either. A person who speaks too much, who is too sociable, is no good.
		felt a little angry, that was all. I did not feel much more than that.
		was annoyed. It was none of his business.
		felt displeased, as was natural, and I wondered why he insulted me.
NO FEELINGS:	16%	tried to control myself and not be perturbed. I tried not to let my base nature take control of me. Everyone suffers from contempt and backbiting: it is inevitable. If we remain undisturbed, they will stop of their own accord.
		was indifferent to him. I live my own life; I have my own work. I do not make my living by taking advantage of others or by cheating others. I do not steal from anybody in order to take care of my wife and children.
DEPRESSION:	13%	felt sorry. I live my own life; I do not trouble anyone; I earn my own living.
		felt unhappy and sorry. In the future I will try not to let him insult me again.
ACTION (28%)		
IMPROVE SELF:	14%	felt hurt and tried to improve myself.
		would behave better, so that they would stop insulting me.
"AVOID STIMULUS":	14%	it is not good to insult someone for no reason. There are a lot of people who like to insult others; they are men who like to gossip
		no one ever insulted me, because I never said anything bad about anybody. Therefore, they never said anything bad about me.

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psychologically stressful situations. Finally, 20 percent of the sample responds simply by leaving the field: they go away or run away from those who annoy them. Although an "active" response in the sense that energy is expended in overt behavior, the reaction is a patent evasion of the annoyance and its perpetrators.

The total of these various categories is 86 percent, indicating that the villagers' tendency to avoid dealing directly with people who annoy them is highly unimodal indeed.

The distribution of responses to *"When he insulted me, I . . ."* is strikingly similar to the above. Because it is a more extreme expression of hurt, some of the responses are a bit more dramatic; also, the internal frequencies of a few of the categories are a bit different. However, the overriding tendency is to deal with the insult by avoiding the insulter and simply feeling internally—angrily, "indifferently," or unhappily. Here, 40 percent of the sample responds with anger or dislike; 16 percent indicate that they have no feelings about the insult or are *chəəj-chəəj;* and 13 percent are depressed, sorry, or unhappy. Only a single individual, however, reacts by leaving the field.

There are two categories of response for which there are no equivalents on the earlier item. Fourteen percent of the informants indicate that the insult has provoked them into improving themselves or behaving better. However, they are explicit in indicating that this is principally a means of ridding themselves of their antagonists. Another 14 percent present what are essentially "avoidance of the stimulus" responses. They say that they have never been insulted or they discuss the immorality of insults. Not surprisingly, all but two of the Buddhist monks in the sample react in this manner.

In summary, the SCT data strongly confirm the villagers' behavioral tendencies to control, deny, and inhibit their aggressive impulses. The data indicate that they do not lack such impulses, but rather that they are unable to act them out in an overt, social manner. Instead, they respond internally and live with the hostility (in an angry, "indifferent," or unhappy fashion) or work it out in the privacy of their own minds. The data also indicate that this tendency is culturally unimodal.

Dominant Drives and Wishes

The materials covered in this section are to the author the most interesting of all the SCT data, not so much from the point of view of what they reveal about the villagers' psychic life as from that of providing answers to questions about an area that is virtually unknown. There are numerous things that the villagers do—make merit, grow rice, tell funny stories, treat

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that an instrument such as the SCT should never be used by itself, or at least not without some reference to behavioral data. The SCT, or my particular version of it, could not readily get at the process of psychological commitment that plays such an important role in the lives of the villagers, and which underlies their "loosely structured social system." In fact, the handling of this process may well be one of the most interesting things about the villagers. In a somewhat oblique way, the SCT data implied the importance of this process: so many of the villagers' responses were phrased in terms of fulfilling social forms and rituals, that an analyst might question the degree of psychological commitment behind them. However, "psychological commitment"—the reliability, depth, and constancy of relationships; the degree of involvement necessary for insuring that an interactional event will even take place—cannot begin to be recognized as an analytic problem until one sees beyond the very social situations that presume it, and this can probably only be done by naturalistic observation and interpretation.

While the SCT and observational data did not contain any striking empirical inconsistencies, they did demonstrate the significance of an issue raised early in this study: the problem of whether the culturally interesting or distinctive is the same as the culturally frequent or modal. The analyses indicated that for the most part these two types of characterization were not incongruent. Thus, the extreme individualism and self-concern of the villagers emerged unmistakably from both sets of data. However, there were instances when the two kinds of characterization were not isomorphic, and resulted in conclusions quite different from those originally expected. Thus, on the basis of the observational materials, I fully anticipated that anxiety about interpersonal relationships would emerge in the SCT responses as the villagers' most frequent form of anxiety. The amount of gossip that occurs in the community, the references that one hears to slander, the touchiness that villagers exhibit in their actual relations with others, all pointed to this conclusion. These were the appraisals of an outside observer struck by the "different" and "unusual" facets of the culture he was studying. Yet the SCT data indicated beyond all doubt that interpersonal anxieties were not, from the villagers' point of view, their most typical form of anxiety. They were worried more about their stomachs than their hearts.[1] This conclusion, deduced from the villagers' own per-

[1] One might argue here from a psychoanalytic point of view that the stomach is simply a substitute for the heart. However, one might also argue from a psychoanalytic point of view that the heart is simply a substitute for the stomach. This Freudian principle of the substitutability of needs cannot by itself account for the *direction* of the substitution (unless one assumes a doctrinaire early Freudian or neo-Freudian position) nor can it prove the *existence* of the hypothetical substitution. These can be demonstrated only by detailed, empirical data on the traumata, repressions, fixations,

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*125 ceptions, took on additional significance when related to the sense of
• 152 psychological worth and self-love that the people of Bang Chan *also* exhibit. Again, the essential issue here is not the presence or absence of anxiety about interpersonal relationships. There is little doubt that villagers do suffer such anxiety. Rather, the question is one of *relative* frequency, and, by implication, the *relative* importance of such suffering to the *total* need and deprivation system of the villagers. It is precisely with regard to this larger kind of question that an instrument such as the SCT can provide context and perspective.

Turning to the theoretical issues that have been raised or suggested by the data, perhaps the most important is the problem of "conformity" as it relates to the villagers' loosely structured social system. This problem is of course at the center of all social psychological research. It is concerned with how, why, and the extent to which individuals relate to their social environments. In fact, in a recent paper aimed at synthesizing the theoretical
114 premises underlying most current culture personality research, Bert Kaplan
121 (1961*b*) presents a cogently argued case for the necessity of anthropologists
*156 and psychologists to shift their attention from the study of why individuals behave in particular ways to the study of this more generalized disposition. He says (665–666):

> Up to now our emerging theory appears to suggest a jungle-like situation in which wholly free and autonomous individuals, in a relatively opportunistic way, make use of the available channels of social partici-

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*125 regressions, and other psychodynamic processes of informants. Even so, it is highly
121 unlikely that the anxiety responses of adults are *simply* the result of a series of
152 unconscious processes—substitutive, projective, or otherwise. It must be remembered that an anxiety response is just as often a function of the ego, oriented to and in the service of the organism's reality needs, as it is a function of unconscious needs derived from the difficulties of the developmental process. When we consider that the villagers live in one of the most unpredictable universes imaginable and that they are a people entering the throes of a revolution of rising expectations, it is not at all surprising that they should feel anxious about threats to their physical well-being, expressed as a fear of going hungry or being poor. In fact, I would suggest that at bottom these are expressions of an existential anxiety about the essential instability, uncertainty, and impermanence of all life (including their own), an anxiety which has its cognitive basis in the "Wheel of Law" and other Buddhist doctrine. It might be argued that since, objectively viewed, the villagers are well fed and enjoy one of the highest standards of living in Asia, such anxieties are without foundation. I would answer by saying that the villagers are not aware of the per capita income figures for Asia, and that "reality" for any people is how they subjectively perceive and define it, not what it objectively is. To say that there is no realistic basis for the villagers' anxiety about going hungry and being poor is like saying that there is no realistic basis for their belief in interminable existences or in the timeless continuity of the self. In both instances they believe these things to be the case, and ultimately that is what is important.